# THE DODD FAMILY ABROAD.



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# DODD FAMILY ABROAD

CHARLES LEVER.

With Illustrations by H. K. Browne.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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# ILLUSTRATIONS.



# THE DODD FAMILY ABROAD.

## LETTER I.

KENNY JAMES DODD TO THOMAS PURCELL, ESQ., OF THE GRANGE, BRUFF.

"The Fox."

My dear Tom,—However Morris managed it I know not, but an order came for my liberation that same evening, with the assurance that my passport was to be made out for wherever I pleased to name, and the Prefect was to express to me his regrets and apologies for an inadvertence which he deeply deplored.

It seemed that, but for diplomacy, I'd not have been detained half an hour; but our worthy representative of Great Britain had asked for copies of all the charges against me so formally, had requested the names, ages, and station in life of the several witnesses, so circumstantially, and had, in fact, imparted such a mock importance to a police impertinence, that the Grand-Ducal authorities began to suspect that they had caught a first-rate revolutionist, with a whole trunkful of Kossuth and Mazzini correspondence. This comes of setting schoolboys to write despatches! The greedy appetite for notoriety—to be up and doing—to be before the world in some public capacity—of these juveniles, brings England into more trouble, and Englishmen into more embarrassment, than you could believe. If they'd be satisfied with recording Royal dinner-parties and Court scandal—who got the Order of the Guinea-pig, and who is to receive the "Tortoise," they couldn't do much harm; but the moment they get hold of an international grievance, and quote Puffendorf, we have no peace on the Continent for six months after.

"You wish to leave Baden," said Morris; "where will you go?"

"I have not the slightest notion," said I. "I'm waiting for letters from Ireland—yours my dear Tom, the chief of them—and therefore it must be somewhere in the vicinity."

"Go over to Rastadt, then," said he, "and amuse yourself with the fortifications: they are now in course of construction, and when completed will be some of the strongest in Europe. I'll give you a letter to the Commandant, who will show all that can interest you, and explain everything that you may wish to know." Rastadt is only twenty miles away; it is, however, in all that regards intercourse with Baden, fully two hundred distant. It is cheap, rarely visited by strangers, has no "fashionables," and, in fact, just the kind of model prison residence that I was wishing for to discipline the family, and get them once more "in hand."

Thither, therefore, we remove to-morrow morning, if nothing unforeseen should occur in the interim. Morris, as you may observe, behaved most kindly in this affair; and, indeed, showed a strong interest in James, from certain remarks the boy himself has let drop; but he seems cold, Tom; one of those excellent fellows that are always doing the right thing for its own sake, and not for yours. I don't want to disparage principle, no more than I do a great balance at Coutts's, or anything else that I don't possess myself; but I mean to say that, somehow or other, one likes to feel that it is to yourself, as an individual—to your own proper identity—a service is rendered, and not to a mere fraction of that great biped race that wear cloth clothes and eat cooked victuals.

That's the way with the English, however, all over the globe, and I have often felt more grateful to an Irishman for helping me on with my surtout, than I have to John Bull for a real downright piece of service. I suppose the fault is more mine than his; but the fact is true, and so I give it to you. I suppose, besides, that an impartial observer of both of us would say that we make too much of every favour, and the Englishman too little; we exact all the obligation of a debt for it, they treat the whole thing lightly, as if the service rendered, and those to whom it was done, were not worthy of further consideration. However we strike the balance between us, Tom—in our favour or against us—I own to you, I like our own way best; and though nothing could be more truly kind and considerate than Morris, it was quite a relief to me when he gave me his cold shake-hands, and said "Good-by!"

And so it will ever be, so long as human actions are swayed by human emotions. The man who recognises your feelings—who regards you with some touch of sympathy—is more your friend than the benevolent machine who bestows upon you his mechanical philanthropy.

"The Golden Ox," Rastadt.

We left Lichtenthal like a thief in the night; and here we are now in the Golden Ox at Rastadt, which, I own to you, seems a most comfortable house. James and I—for we are now *two* parties domestically, Mrs. D. and

Mary Anne, living very much to themselves, and Cary still on a visit with Morris's mother—had a most excellent breakfast of fresh trout, a roast partridge, a venison steak with capers—a capital dish—and chocolate, with abundance of good white wine of the place, and on calling for the bill, out of curiosity, I see we are charged something under a florin for two of us—about tenpence each. Tom, this will do. You may therefore look upon me as a citizen of Rastadt for the next month to come. I have kept my letter by me hitherto, to give you a bulletin of this place before closing it, and I have still some time at my disposal before the post leaves.

I'm not sure though I'd exactly recommend this town to a patient labouring under nervous headaches, or to a university man reading for honours. Indeed, up to this—I suppose I'll get used to it later on—the din has so addled me, that I have often to stand two minutes reflecting over what I had to say, and then own that I have forgotten it. We are—that is, the Ox is—in the quietest spot in the town, and yet close under my bedroom there are, from early morning till dusk, twelve drummers at practice, with a head drummer to teach them. In the green, before the door, two companies of recruits are at drill. The foot artillery limbers and unlimbers all day in the "Platz" close by, and what should be our garden is a riding-school for the cadets. These several educational establishments have their peculiar tumult, which accompany me through my sleep; and for all the requirements of quiet and reflection, I might as well have taken up my abode in a kettle-drum. Liege was a Trappist monastery in comparison! As it is, the routine tramp of feet has made me conform to the step, and I march "quick" or "orderly," exactly as the fellows are doing it outside. I swallow my soup to the sound of a trumpet, and take off my clothes to the roll of the drum. James is in ecstasy with it all; I never saw him enjoy himself so much. He is out looking at them the entire day, and I'm greatly mistaken but Mary Anne passes a large portion of her time at the green "jalousie" that opens over the riding-school.

I am always asking myself—that is, whenever I can summon composure even for so much—what do the Germans want with all these soldiers? Surely they're not going to invade France, nor Russia; and yet their armies are maintained in a strength that might imply it! As to any occasion for them at home in their own land, it's downright balderdash to talk of it! Do you know, Tom, that whenever I think of Germany and her rulers, I am strongly reminded of poor old Doctor Drake, that lived at Dronestown, and the flea-bitten mare he used to drive in his gig. She was forty if she was an hour; she was quiet and docile from the day she was foaled: all the whipping in the world couldn't shake her into five miles an hour, and yet the Doctor had her surrounded with every precaution and appliance that would have suited a regular runaway. There were safety-reins, and kicking-straps, and

double traces without end—and all to restrain a poor old beast that only wanted to be let alone, and drag out her tiresome existence in the jog-trot she was used to! "Ah, you don't know as well as I do," Drake would say; "she's a devil at heart, and if she didn't feel it was useless to resist, she'd smash everything behind her. She looks quiet enough, but *that* doesn't impose upon *me*." These were the kind of reflections he indulged in, and I suppose they are about the same in use in the Cabinets of Austria, Prussia, and Bavaria. I was often malicious enough for a half wish that Drake should have a spicy devil in the shafts, just for once, to show him a trick or two; and in the same spirit, Tom, I cannot help saying, that I'd like to see John Bull "put to" in this fashion! Wouldn't he kick up—wouldn't he soon knock the whole concern to atoms! Ah, Tom, it's all alike, believe me; and whether you have to drive a nag or a nation, take my word for it, the kicking-straps are only efficacious when the beast hasn't a kick in him! At all events, such are not the popular notions here, and on they go, building fortresses, strengthening garrisons, and reinforcing army corps, till at last the military will be more numerous than the nation, and every prisoner will have two gaolers to restrain him. "Who is to pay?" becomes the question; but indeed that is the very question that puzzles me now. Who pays for all this at present? Is it possible that a people will suffer itself to be taxed that it may be bullied? I'm unable to continue this theme, for there go the drums again—there are forty of them at it now! What's in the wind I can't guess. Oh, here's the explanation. It is the Herr Commandánt—be sure you accent the last syllable—is come to pay me a visit, and the guard has turned out to drum him up-stairs!

Four o'Clock.

He is gone at last—I thought he never would—and I have only time to say that he has appointed to-morrow after breakfast to show me the Fortress, and as I am too late for the post, I'll be able to add a line or two before this leaves me. Mary Anne has come to say that her Mother's head is distracted, and that she cannot endure the uproar of the place. My reply is: "Mine is exactly in the same way; but I cannot go any further—I've no money."

Mrs. D. "thinks she'll go mad!" If she means it in earnest, this is as cheap a place to do it in as any I know. We are only to pay two pounds a week each, and I suppose whether we preserve our senses or not makes no difference in the expense! This would sound very unfeelingly, Tom, but that you are well aware of Mrs. D.'s system, and that she gives notice of a motion without any intention of going to a debate, much less of pressing for a "division." Mary Anne is very urgent that I should see her Mother, but I am not quite equal to it yet Maybe after visiting the Fortress to-morrow I'll be in a more martial mood; and now here's dinner, and a most savoury odour preludes it.

Tuesday.

This must go as it is, Tom—I'm dead beat! That old veteran wouldn't let me off a casemate, nor a bomb-proof, and I have walked twenty miles this blessed morning! Nor is that all, but I have handled shot, lifted cannon-balls, adjusted mortars, and peeped out of embrasures, till my back is half broken with straining and fatigue. Just to judge from what I'm suffering, a siege must be a dreadful thing! He says he showed me everything; and, upon my conscience, I can well believe it! There was a great deal of it, too, that I saw in the dark, for there was no end of galleries without a single loophole, and many of the passages seemed only four feet high; for, though a short man, I had to stoop. I ought to have a great deal to say about this place, if I could remember it, or if I could be sure it would interest you. It appears that Rastadt is built upon an entirely new principle, quite distinct from any hitherto in use. It must be attacked *en ricochet*, and not directly; a hint, I suppose, they stole from our common law, where they fire into *you*, by pretending to assail John Doe or Richard Roe. The Commandant sneered at the old system, but I'd rather trust myself in Gibraltar, notwithstanding all he said. It stands to reason, Tom, that if you are up in a window you have a great advantage over a fellow down in the street. Now all these modern fortresses are what is called "*à fleur d'eau*," quite level, and not raised in the least over the attacking force. Put me up high, say I; if on a parapet so much the better; and besides, Tom, nothing gives a man such coolness as to know that he is all as one as out of danger! Of course, I didn't make this remark to the Commandant, because in talking with military people it is good tact always to assume that being shot at is rather pleasant than otherwise; and so I have observed that they themselves generally make use of some jocular phrase or other to express being killed and wounded; "he was knocked over," "he got an ugly poke," being the more popular mode of recording what finished a man's existence, or made the remainder of it miserable.

Soldiering has always struck me as an insupportable line of life. I have no objection in the world to fight the man who has injured *me*, nor to give satisfaction where I have been the offender; but to go patiently to work to learn how to destroy somebody I never saw and never heard of, *does* seem absurd and unchristianlike altogether. You say, "He is the enemy of my country, and consequently mine." Let me see that; let me be sure of it. If he invades us, I know that he is an enemy; but if he is only occupied about his own affairs—if he is simply hunting out a nest of old squatters that he is tired of—if he is merely changing the sign of his house, and instead of the "Lily" prefers to live under the "Cock," or, maybe, the "Drone-bee," what have I to say to that? So long as he stays at home, and only "gets drunk on the premises," I have no right to meddle with him. It's all very well to

say that nobody likes to have a disorderly house in his neighbourhood. Very true; but you oughtn't to go in and murder the residents to keep them quiet! There's the mail gone by, and I have forgotten to send this off. It's a wonderful thing how living in Germany makes a man long-winded and tiresome. It must be the air, at least with me, or the cookery, for I am perfectly innocent of the language. The "mysterious gutturals," as Macaulay calls them, will ever be mysteries to *me!* At all events, to prevent further indiscretions, I'll close this and seal it now. And so, with my sincere regards, believe me, dear Tom, ever yours,

KENNY I. DODD.

Address me, "Golden Ox"—I mean at the sign of—Rastadt, for you're sure of finding me here for the next four weeks, at least.

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## LETTER II.

MARY ANNE DODD TO MISS DOOLAN, OF BALLYDOOLAN.

"The Golden Ox," Rastadt.

MY DEAREST KITTY,—I have only time for a few and very hurried lines, written with trembling fingers and a heart audible in its palpitations! Yes, dearest, an eventful moment has arrived—the dread instant has come, on which my whole future destiny must depend. It was last night, just as I was making Papa's tea, that a servant arrived on horseback at the inn with a letter addressed to the Right Honourable and Reverend the Lord Dodd de Dodsborough. This, of course, could only mean Papa, and so he opened and read it, for it was in English, dearest, or at least in imitation of that language.

I refrain from quoting the precise expressions, lest in circumstances so serious a smile of passing levity should cross those dear features, now all tension with anxiety for your own Mary Anne. The letter was from Adolf von Wolfenschäfer, making me an offer of his hand, title, and fortune! I swooned as I when I heard it, and only recovered to hear Papa still spelling out the strange phraseology of the letter.

I wish he had not written in English, Kitty. It is provoking that an event so naturally serious in itself should be alloyed with the dross of grammatical absurdities; besides that, really, our tongue does not lend itself to those delicate and half-vanishing allusions to future bliss so germane to such a pro-



posal. Papa, and James, too, I must say, evinced a want of regard to my feelings, and an absence of that fine sympathy which I should have looked for at a moment like this. They actually screamed with laughter, Kitty, at little lapses of orthography, when the subject might reasonably have imposed far different emotions.

"Why, it's a proposal of marriage!" exclaimed Mamma; "and I thought it a summons from the police."

"Egad, so it is!" cried James. "It's an offer to you, Mary Anne. 'The Baron Adolf von Wolfenschäfer, Freiherr von Schweinbraten, and Ritter of the Order of the Cock of Tubingen, maketh hereby, and not the less, that with future-coming-time-to-be-proved-and-experienced affection, the profound humility of an offer of himself, with all his to-be-named-and-enumerated belongings, both in effects and majorats, to the lovely and very beautiful Miss, the first daughter of the Venerable and very Honourable the Lord Dodd de Dodsborough.'"

"Pray stop, James," said I; "this is scarcely a fitting matter for coarse jesting, nor is my heart to be made the theme for indelicate banter."

"The letter is a gem," said he, and went on: "'The so-named A. von W., overflowing with a mild but in-heaven-soaring and never-to-earth-descending love, expecteth, in all the pendulating anxieties of a never-at-any-moment-to-be-distrusted devotion——'"

"Papa, I really beg and request that I may not be trifled with in this unfeeling manner. The Baron's intentions are sufficiently clear and explicit, nor are we now engaged in the work of correcting his English epistolary style."

This I said haughtily, Kitty; and Mister James at last thought proper to recover some respect for my feelings.

"Why, I never suspected you could take the thing seriously, dear Mary Anne," said he. "If I only thought——"

"And pray, why not, James? I'm sure the Baron's ancient birth—his rank, his fortune—his position, in fact——"

"Of all of which we know nothing," broke in Papa.

"But of which you may know everything," said I; "for here, at the postscript, is an invitation to us all to pass some weeks at the Schloss, in the Black Forest, his ancestral seat."

"Or, as he styles it," broke in James, impertinently, "'the very old castle, where for numerous centuries his high-blooded and on-lofty-eminence-standing ancestors did sit, and where now his with-years-bestricken but not-the-less-on-that-account-sharp-with-intelligence-begifted parent Father doth reside.'"

"Read that again, James," said Papa.

"Pray allow me, sir," said I, taking the letter. "The invitation is a most

hospitable request that we should go and pass some time at his château, and name the earliest day our convenience will permit for the visit."

"He spoke of capital shooting there!" cried James. "He told me that the Auer-Hahn, a kind of black-cock, abounds in that country."

"And I remember, too, that he mentioned some wonderful Steinberger—a cabinet wine, full two hundred years in wood!" chimed in Papa.

I wished, dearest Kitty, that they could have entertained the subject-matter of the letter without these "contingent remainders," and not mixed up my future fate with either wine or wild fowl; but they really were so carried away by the pleasures so peculiary adapted to their own feelings, that they at once said, and in a breath, too, "Write him word 'Yes,' by all means!"

"Do you mean for his offer of marriage, Papa?" asked I, with struggling indignation.

"By George, I had forgotten all about that," said he. "We must deliberate a bit. Your Mother, too, will expect to be consulted. Take the letter up-stairs to her; or, better still, just say that I want to speak to her myself."

As Papa and Mamma had not met, nor spoken together, since his return, I willingly embraced this opportunity of restoring them to intercourse with each other.

"Don't go away, Mary Anne," said James, as I was about to seek my own room, for I dreaded being left alone, and exposed to his unfeeling banter; "I want to speak to you." This he said with a tone of kindness and interest which at once decided me to remain. He wore a look of seriousness, Kitty, that I have seldom, if ever, seen in his features and spoke in a tone that, to my ears, was new from him.

"Let me be your friend, Mary Anne," said he, "and the better to be so, let me talk to you in all frankness and sincerity. If I say one single word that can hurt your feelings, put it down to the true account—that I'd rather do even such than suffer you to take the most eventful step in all your life without weighing every consequence of it. Answer me, then, two or three questions that I shall ask you, but as truly and unreservedly as though you were at confession."

I sat down beside him, and with my hand in his.

"Now, first of all, Mary Anne," said he, "do you love this Baron von Wolfenschäfer?"

Who ever could answer such a question in one word, Kitty? How seldom does it occur in life that all the circumstances of any man's position respond to the ambitious imaginings of a girl's heart! He may be handsome, and yet poor; he may be rich, and yet low born; intellectual, and yet his great gifts may be alloyed with infirmities of temper; he may be coldly-natured, secret, self-contained, uncommunicative—a hundred things that one

does not like—and yet, with all these drawbacks, what the world calls an "excellent match."

I believe very few people marry the person they wish to marry. I fancy that such instances are the rarest things imaginable. It is a question of compensation throughout—you accept this, notwithstanding that—you put up with *that*, for the sake of this! Of course, dearest, I am rejecting here all belief in the "greatest happiness principle" as a stupid fallacy, that only imposes upon elderly gentlemen when they marry their housekeeper. I speak of the considerations which weigh with a young girl who has moved in society, who knows its requirements, and can estimate all that contributes to what is called a "position."

This little digression of mine will give you to understand what was passing in my mind as James sat waiting for my reply.

"So then," said he, at last, "the question is not so easily answered as I suspected; and we will now pass to another one. Are your affections already engaged elsewhere?"

What could I say, Kitty, but "No! decidedly not." The embarrassment, however, so natural to an inquiry like this, made me blush and seem confused, and James, perceiving it, said.

"Poor fellow, it will be a sad blow to *him*, for I know he loved you"

I tried to look astonished, angry, unconscious—anything, in fact, which should convey displeasure and surprise together; but with that want of tact so essentially fraternal, he went on:

"It was almost the last thing he said to me at parting, 'Don't let her forget me!'"

"May I venture to inquire," said I, haughtily, "of whom you are speaking?"

Simple and inoffensive as the words were, Kitty, they threw him into an ungovernable passion; he stamped, and stormed, and swore fearfully. He called me "a heartless coquette," "an unfeeling flirt," and a variety of epithets equally mellifluous as well merited.

I drew my embroidery-frame before me quite calmly under this torrent of abuse, and worked away at my pattern of the "Faithful Shepherd," singing to myself all the time.

"Are you really as devoid of feeling as this, Mary Anne?" asked he.

"My dear brother," said I, "don't you wish excessively for a commission in a regiment of Hussars or Lancers? Well, as your great merits have not been recognised at the Horse Guards, would you feel justified in refusing an appointment to the Rifle Brigade?"

"What has all this to say to what we are discussing?" cried he, angrily.

"Just everything," replied I; "but as you cannot make the application, you must excuse *me* if I decline the task also."

"And so you mean to be a Baroness?" said he, rudely.

I curtseyed profoundly to him, and he flung out of the room with a bang that nearly brought the door down. In a moment after, Mamma was in my arms, overcome with tenderness and emotion.

"I have carried the day, my dearest child," said she. "We are to accept the invitation, at all events, and we set out to-morrow."

I have no time for more, Kitty, for all our preparations for departure have yet to be made. What fate awaits me I know not, nor can I even fancy what may be the future of your ever attached and devoted friend,

Mary Anne Dodd.

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## LETTER III.

### MRS. DODD TO MRS. MARY GALLAGHER, DODSBOROUGH.

Schloss, Wolfenfels.

My dear Molly,—It is only since we came to the elegant place, the hard name of which I have written at the top of this letter, that my feelings have subsided into the calm sereniousness adapted to epistolary correspondence. From the day that K. I. returned, my life has been like the parallax of a fever! The man was never possessed of any refined or exalted sentiments; but the woman, this Mrs. G. H.—I couldn't write the name in full if you were to give me twenty pounds for it—made him far worse with self-conceit and vanity. If you knew the way my time is passed, "taking it out of him," Molly, showing him how ridiculous he is, and why everybody is laughing at him, you'd pity me. As to gratitude, my dear, he hasn't a notion of it; and he feels no more thankful to me for what I've gone through, than if I was indulging him in all his nefarious propensities. It is a weary task; and the only wonder is how I'm able to go on with it.

"Haven't you done yet, Mrs. D.?" said he, the other morning. "Don't you think that you might grant me a little peace, now?"

"I wish to the saints I had," said I; "it's bringing me to the grave, it is; but I have a duty to perform, and as long as my tongue can wag, I'll do it! When I'm gone, K. I.," said I—"when I'm gone, you'll not have to say, 'It was her fault—it was all her doing. Jemima never said this—she never told me that.'" I vow and declare to you here, Molly, that there isn't a thing a woman could say to a man, that I haven't said to him; and as I remarked yesterday, "If I haven't taken the self-conceit out of you, now, it is

because it's grained in your nature"—I believe, indeed, I said, "in your filthy nature."

When we left Baden, we came to a place called Rastadt, a great fortification that they're making, as they tell me, to defend the Rhine; but, between ourselves, it's as far from the river as our house at Dodsborough is from Kelly's mills. There, we stopped three weeks—I believe in the confident hope of K. I. that I couldn't survive the uproarious tumult. They were drilling or training horses, or firing guns, or flogging recruits under our windows, from sunrise to sunset, and although at first the novelty was amusing, you grew at last so tormented and teased with the noise, that your very brain ached from it.

"I wonder," said I, one night, "that you never thought of taking furnished apartments in Barrack-street! It ought to be to your taste."

"It's not unlikely, Ma'am, that I may end my days in that neighbourhood," said he, tartly, "for I believe it's very convenient to the Sheriff's prison."

"I was alluding to your military tastes," said I. "One might suppose you were meant for a great General."

"I might have claim to the character, Ma'am," said he, "if being always under fire signified anything—always exposed to attack."

"Oh, but," said I, "you forget she has retired her forces"—I meant Mrs. G., Molly—"she took pity on your poor unprotected situation!"

"Look now, Mrs. D.," said he, with a blow of his first on the table, "if there's another word—one syllable more on this matter, may I never sign my name K. I. again, if I don't walk you back, every one of you, to Dodsborough. It was an evil hour that saw us leave it, but it wonld be a joyous one that brings us back again."

When he grows so brutal as that, Molly, I never utter a word. 'Tisn't today nor yesterday that I learned to be a martyr; so that all I did was to wait a minute or two, and then go off in strong hysterics! and, indeed, I don't know anything that provokes him more.

I give you this as a slight sample of the way we lived, with occasional diversions on the subject of expense, the extravagance of James, his idleness, and so forth; pleasant topics, and amusing for a family circle. Indeed, Molly, I'm ashamed to own that my natural spirit was beginning to break down under it. I felt that all the blood of the M'Carthys was weak to resist such inhuman cruelty; and whether it was the climate, or what, I don't know, but crying didn't give me the same relief it used. I suppose the fact is, that one exhausts the natural resources of one's constitution; but I think I'm not so old but that a good hearty cry ought to be a comfort to

This is how affairs was, when, about a week ago, came a servant on horseback, with a letter for K. I. I was sitting up at my window, with the blinds down, when I saw the man get off and enter the inn, and the first thought that struck me was, that it was Mrs. G. herself sent him. "I've caught you," says I to myself; and throwing on my dressing-gown I slipped down stairs. It was K. I. and James were together talking, so I just waited a second at the door to listen. "If I had a voice in the family"—it was K. I. said this —"if I had a voice in the family," said he, "I'd refuse. These kind of things always turn out ill—people calculate so much upon affection; but the truth is, marrying for love is like buying a pair of Russia-duck trousers to wear through the year. They'll do beautifully in summer, and even an odd day in the autumn; but in the cold and rainy season they'll be downright ridiculous."

"Still," said James, "the offer sounds like a great one."

"All glitter, maybe. I distrust them all, James. At any rate, say nothing about it to your Mother, till I think it over a bit."

"And why not say anything to his Mother?" says I, bouncing into the room. "Am I nobody in the family?"

"Bedad you are!" said K. I., with a heavy sigh.

"Haven't I an opinion of my own—eh?"

"That you have!" said he.

"And don't I stand to it! too—eh, Kenny James?"

"Your worst enemy couldn't deny it!" said he, shaking his head.

"Then what's all this about?" said I, snatching the letter out of his hands. But though I tried with my double eye-glass, Molly, it was no use, for the writing was in a German hand, not to say anything of the language.

"Well, Ma'am," said K. I., with a grin, "I hope the contents are pleasing to you?" And before I could fly out at him, James broke in: "It's a proposal for Mary Anne, Mother. The young baron that we met at Bonn makes her an offer of his hand and fortune, and invites us all to his castle in the Black Forest, as a preliminary step."

"Isn't that to your taste, Mrs. D.?" said K. I., with another grin "High connexion—nobility—great family—eh?"

"I don't think," said I, "that, considering the step I took myself in life, anybody can reproach me with prejudices of that kind." The step I took! Molly, I said the words with a sneer that made him purple.

"What's his fortune, James?" said I.

"Heaven knows! but he must have a stunning income. This Castle of Wolfenfels is in all the print-shops of the town. It's a thing as large as Windsor, and surrounded by miles of forest."

"My poor child," said I, "I always knew where you'd be at last; and it's

only two nights ago I had a dream of taking grease out of my yellow satin. I thought I was rubbing and scrubbing at it with all my might."

"And what did that portend Ma'am?" said K. I., with his usual sneer.

"Can't you guess?" said I. "Mightn't it mean an effort to get rid of the stain of a low connexion?" Wasn't that a home thrust, Molly? Faith he felt it so!

"Mrs. D." said he, gravely, and as if after profound thought, "this is a question of our child's happiness for life-long, and if we are to discuss it at all, let it be without any admixture of attack or recrimination."

"Who began it?" said I.

"You did, my dear," said he.

"I didn't," said I; "and I'm not 'your dear.' Oh, you needn't sigh that way; your case isn't half so bad as you think it, but, like all men, you fancy yourself cruelly treated whenever the slightest bar is placed to your bad passions. You argue as if wickedness was good for your constitution."

"Have you done?" said he.

"Not yet," said I, taking a chair in front of him.

"When you have, then," said he, "call me, for I'll go out and sit on the stairs." But I put my back to the door, Molly, so that he had nothing for it but to resume his seat. "Let us move the order of the day, Mrs. D.," said he—"this business of Mary Anne. My opinion of it is told in few words. These mixed marriages seldom succeed. Even with long previous intimacy, suitable fortune, and equality of station, there is that in a difference of nationality that opens a hundred discrepancies in taste, feeling——"

"Bother!" said I, "we have just as much when we come from the same stock."

"Sometimes," said he, sighing.

"Here's what he says, Mother," said James, and read out the letter, which I am bound to say, Molly, was a curiosity in its way, for though it had such a strange look, it turned out to be in English, or at least what the Baron thought was such. Happily there was no mistaking the meaning; and as I said to K. I., "At least there's one thing in the Baron's favour—there's neither deceit nor subterfuge about him. He makes his proposal like a man!" And let me tell you, Molly, we live in an age when even that same is a virtue; for really, with the liberties that's allowed, and the way girls goes on, there's no saying what intentions men have at all!

Some mothers make a point of never seeing anything; but that may be carried too far, particularly abroad, my dear. Others are for always being dragons, but that is sure to scare off the men; and as I say, what's the use of birdlime if you're always shouting and screaming!

My notion is, Molly, that a moderate degree of what the French call "surveillance" is the right thing—a manner that seems to say: "I'm look-

ing at you: I'm not against innocent enjoyments, and so forth, but I won't stand any nonsense, nor falling in love." Many's the time the right man is scared away by a new flirtation, that meant nothing: "She's too gay for *me*—she has a look in her eye, or a toss of the head, or a—Heaven knows—I don't like."

"Does she care for him?" said K. I. "Does Mary Anne care for him?—that's the question."

"Of course she does," said I. "If a girl's affections are not engaged in some other quarter, she always cares for the man that proposes for her. Isn't he a good match?"

"He as much as says so himself."

"And a Baron?"

"Yes."

"And has an elegant place, with a park of miles round it?"

"So he says."

"Well, then, I'm sure I see nothing to prevent her being attached to him."

"At all events, let us speak to her," said he; and sent James up-stairs to fetch her down.

Short as the time was that he was away, it was enough for K. I. to get into one of his passions, just because I gave him the friendly caution that he ought to be delicate and guarded in the way he mentioned the matter to Mary Anne.

"Isn't she my daughter?" said he, with a stamp of his foot; and just for that, Molly, I wouldn't give him the satisfaction to say she is.

"I ask you," cried he again, "isn't she my daughter?"

Not a syllable would I answer him.

"Well, maybe she isn't," said he; "but my authority over her is all the same."

"Oh, you can be as cruel and tyrannical as you please," said I.

"Look now, Mrs. D.——," said he; but, fortunately, Molly, just at that moment James and his sister came in, and he stopped suddenly.

"Oh, dearest Papa," cried Mary Anne, falling at his feet, and hiding her face in her hands, "how can I leave you, and dear, dear Mamma."

"That's what we are going to talk over, my dear," said he, quite dryly, and taking a pinch of snuff.

"Your Father is never overpowered by his commotions, my love," said I.

"To forsake my happy home!" sobbed Mary Anne, as if her heart was breaking. "Oh, what an agony to think of!"

"To be sure it is," said K. I., in the same hard, husky voice; "but it's what we see done every day. Ask your Mother——"

"Don't ask me to justify it," said I. "*My* experiences go all the other way!"

"At any rate you ventured on the experiment," said he, with a grin. Then, turning to Mary Anne, he went on: "I see that James has informed you on this affair, and it only remains for me now to ask you what your sentiments are."

"Oh, my poor heart!" said she, pressing her hand to her side, "how can I divide its allegiance?"

"Don't try that, at all events," said he, "for though I never thought him a suitable match for you, my dear, if you really do feel an attachment to Peter Belton——"

"Of course I do not, Papa."

"Of course she does not—never did—never could," said I.

"So much the better," said he; "and now for this Baron von—I never can remember his name—do you think you could be happy with him? Or do you know enough of his temper, tastes, and disposition to answer that question?"

"I'm sure he is a most amiable person; he is exceedingly clever and accomplished ——"

"I don't care a brass bodkin for all that," broke in K. I. "A man may be as wise as the bench of bishops, and be a bad husband."

"Let *me* talk to Mary Anne," said I. It's only a female heart, Molly, understands these cases; for men discuss them as if they were matters of reason! And with that I marched her off with me to my own room.

I needn't tell you all I said, nor what she replied to me; but this much I will say, a more sensible girl I never saw. She took in the whole of our situation at once. She perceived that there was no saying how long K. I. might be induced to remain abroad; it might be, perhaps, to-morrow, or next day, that he'd decide to go back to Ireland. What a position we'd be in, then! "I don't doubt," says she, "but if time were allowed me, I could do better than this. With the knowledge I have now of life, I feel very confident; but if we are to be marched off before the campaign begins, Mamma, how are we to win our laurels?" Them's her words, Molly, and they express her meaning beautifully.

We agreed at last that the best thing was to accept the invitation to the castle, and when we saw the place, and the way of living, we could then decide on the offer of marriage.

If I could only repeat to you the remarks Mary Anne made about this, you'd see what a girl she was, and what a wonderful degree of intelligence she possesses. Even on the point that K. I. himself raised a doubt—the difference of nationality, and language—she summed up the whole question in a few words. Her observation was, that this very circumstance was rather an advantage than otherwise, "as offering a barrier against that over-intimacy and over-familiarity that is the bane of married life."

"The fact is, Mamma," said she, "people do not conform to each other. They make a show of doing so, and they become hypocrites—great or little ones, as their talents decide for them—but their real characters remain at bottom unchanged. Now, married to a foreigner, a woman need not even affect to assume his tastes and habits. She may always follow her own, and set them down, whatever they be, to the score of her peculiar nationality."

She is really, Molly, an astonishing girl, and in all that regards life and knowledge of mankind, I never met her equal. As to Caroline, she never could have made such a remark. The advantages of the Continent are clean thrown away on her; she knows no more of the world than the day we left Dodsborough. Indeed, I sometimes half regret that we didn't leave her behind with the Doolans; for I observe, that whenever foreign travel fails in inculcating new refinement and genteel notions, it is sure to strengthen all old prejudices, and suggest a most absurd attachment to one's own country; and when that happens to be Ireland, Molly, I need scarcely say how injurious the tendency is! It's very dreadful, my dear, but it's equally true, whenever anything is out of fashion, in bad taste, vulgar, or common, you're sure to hear it called Irish, though, maybe, it never crossed the Channel; and out of self-defence one is obliged to adopt the custom.

On one point Mary Anne and myself were both agreed. It is next to impossible for any one but a banker's daughter, or in the ballet, to get a husband in the peerage at home. The nobility, with us, are either very cunning or very foolish. As to the gentry class, they never think of them at all. The consequence is, that a girl who wishes for a title must take a foreigner. Now, Molly, German nobility is mightily like German silver—it has only a look of the real article; but, if you can't afford the right thing, it is better than the vulgar metal!

Mary Anne has declared, over and over again, that nothing would induce her to be Mrs. Anybody. As she says, "Your whole life is passed in a struggle, if not heralded by a designation, even though it only be 'Madame.'" And sure nobody knows this better than I do. Hasn't the odious name weighed me down for years past?

"Take him, then, my dear child," said I—"take him, then, and may you have luck in your choice! It will be a consolation to me, in all my troubles and trials, to know that one of my girls at least sustains the honour of her mother's family. You'll be a Baroness at all events."

She pressed my hand affectionately, Molly, but said nothing. I saw that the poor dear child wasn't doing it all without some sacrifice or other; but I was too prudent to ask questions. There's nothing, in my opinion, does such mischief as the system of probing and poking into wounds of the affections; it's the sure way to keep them open, and prevent their healing; so that I kept on, never-minding, and only talked of "the Baron."

"It will kill the Davises," said she, at last; "they'll die of spite when they hear it."

"That they will," said I; "and they'll deny it to all the neighbours, till it's copied into the country papers out of the *Morning Post*. What will become of all their sneering remarks about going abroad now, I wonder! Faith, my dear, you might live long enough at Bruff without seeing a Baron."

"I think Mr. Peter, too, will at last perceive the outrageous absurdity of his pretensions," said she. "The Castle of Wolfenfels is not exactly like the village dispensary."

In a word, my dear Molly, we considered the question in all its bearings, and agreed, that though we had rather he was a Viscount, with a fine estate at home, yet that the thing was still too good to refuse. "It's a fine position," said Mary Anne, "and I'll see if I can't improve it." We agreed, as Caroline was so happy where she was—on a visit with this Mrs. Morris—that we'd leave her there a little longer; for, as Mary Anne remarked, "She's so natural, and so frank, and so very confiding, she'll just tell everything about us, and spoil all!" And it is true, Molly. That girl has no more notion of the difficulties it costs us to be what we are, and where we are, than if she wasn't one of the family. She's a regular Dodd, and no more need be said.

The next day, you may be sure, wasn't an idle one. We had to pack all our things, to get a new livery made for Paddy Byrne, and to hire a travelling carriage, so that we might make our appearance in a style becoming us. Betty, too, had to be drilled how she was to behave in a great house full of servants, and taught not to expose us by any of her outlandish ways. Mary Anne had her up to eat before her, and teach her various politenesses; but the saints alone can tell how the lesson will prosper!

We started from Rastadt in great style—six posters, and a riding courier in front, to order relays on the road. Even the sight of it, Molly, and the tramp of the horses, and the jingle of the bells on the harness, all did me good, for I'm of a susceptible nature; and what between my sensations at the moment, and the thought of all before us, I cried heartily for the first two stages.

"If it overcomes you so much," said K. I., "don't you think you'd better turn back?"

Did you ever hear brutality like that speech, Molly? I ask you, in all your experience of life, did you ever know of any man that could make himself so odious? You may be sure I didn't cry much after that! I made it so comfortable to him, that he was glad to exchange places with Betty, and get into the rumble for the remainder of the journey.

Betty herself, too, was in one of her blessed tempers, all because Mary Anne wouldn't let her stick all the old artificial flowers, that were thrown away, over her bonnet. As Mary Anne said to her, "She only wanted wax candles to be like a Christmas-tree." The consequence was, that she cried and howled all the way, till we dined; after that she slept and snored awfully. To mend matters, Paddy got very drunk, and had to be tied on the box, and drew a crowd round us, at every place we changed horses, by his yells. In other respects the journey was agreeable.

We supped at a place called Offenburg; and, indeed, I thought we'd never get away from it, for K. I. found out that the landlord could speak English, and was, besides, a great farmer; and, in spite of Mary Anne and myself, he had the man in to supper, and there they sat, smoking, and drinking, and prosing about clover, and green crops, and flax, and such things, till past midnight. However, it did one thing—it made K. I. good-humoured for the rest of the way; for the truth is, Molly, the nature of the man is unchanged, and, I believe, unchangeable. Do what we will, take him where we may, give him all the advantages of high life and genteel society, but his heart will still cling to yearling heifers and ewes; and he'd rather be at Ballinasloe than a ball at Buckingham Palace.

We ought to have been at Freyburg in time to sleep, but we didn't get there till breakfast hour. I'm mighty particular about all the names of these places, Molly, for it will amuse you to trace our journey on the celestial globe in the schoolroom, and then you'll perceive how we are going "round the world" in earnest.

After breakfast we went to see the cathedral of the town. It is really a fine sight; and the carving that's thrown away in dark, out-of-the-way places, would make two other churches. The most beautiful thing of all, however, is an image of the Virgin, sheltering under her cloak more than a dozen cardinals and bishops. She is looking down at the creatures—for they are all made small in comparison—with an angelical smile, as much as to say, "Keep quiet, and nobody will see you." I suppose she wants to get them into heaven "unknownst;" or, as James rather irreverently expressed it, "going to do it by a dodge." To judge by their faces, they are not quite at their ease; they seem to think that their case isn't too good, and that it will go hard with them if they're found out! And I suppose, my dear Molly, that's the way with the best of us. Sure, with all our plotting and scheming for the good of our children, after lives of every kind of device, ain't we often masses of corruption?—isn't our very best thoughts, sometimes, wicked enough? Them was exactly my own meditations, as I sat alone in a dark corner of the church, musing and reflecting, and only brought to myself as I heard K. I. fighting with one of the "beagles"—I think they call them—about a bad groschen in change!

"I'm never in a heavenly frame of mind, K. I." said I to him, "that you don't bring me back to earthly feelings with your meanness."

"If you told me you were going to heaven, Mrs. D.," said he, "I wouldn't have brought you out of it for worlds!"

It didn't need the grin that he gave, to show me what the meaning of this speech was. The old wretch said as much as that he wished me dead and buried; so I just gave him a look, and passed out of the church with contempt. Oh, Molly, Molly, whatever may be your spire in life, never descend from it for a husband!

You'll laugh when I tell you that we left this place by the Valley of Hell. That's the name of it; and so far as gloom and darkness goes, not a bad name either. It is a deep, narrow glen, with only room for a narrow road at the bottom of it, and over your head the rocks seem ready to tumble down and crush you to atoms. Instead, too, of getting through it as fast as we could, K. I. used to stop the carriage, and get out to "examine the position," as he called it; for it seems that a great French general once made a wonderful retreat through this same pass years ago. K. I. and James had bought a map, and this they used to spread out on the ground; and sometimes they got into disputing about the name of this place or that, so that the Valley of Hell had its share of torments for me and Mary Anne before we got out of it.

At a little lake called the "Titi See"—be sure you look for it on the globe, and you'll know it by a small island in it with willow-trees—we found that the Baron had sent horses to meet us, and eight miles more brought us to the place of our destiny. I own to you, Molly, that I could have cried with sheer disappointment, when I found we were in the demesne without knowing it. I was always looking out for a grand entrance; maybe an archway between two towers, like Nockslobber Castle; or an elegant cut-stone building, with a lodge at each side, like Dolly Mount; but there we were, Molly, driving through deep clay roads, with great fields of maize at each side of us, and neither a gate, nor a hedge—not a bit of paling to be seen anywhere. There were trees enough, but they were ugly pines and firs, or beech, with all the lower branches lopped away for firewood. We had two miles or more of this interesting landscape, and then we came out upon a great wide space planted with mangel and beetroot, and all cut up with little drains, or canals of running water; and in the middle of this, like a great, big, black, dirty gaol, stood the Castle of Wolfenfels. I give you my first impressions honestly, Molly, because, on nearer acquaintance, I have lived to see them changed.

I must say our reception drove all other thoughts away. The old Baron was confined to his room with the gout, and couldn't come down to meet us; but the discharge of cannon, the sounds of music, and the joyful shouts of the people—of whom there were some hundreds assembled—was really imposing.

The young Baron, too, looked far more awake and alive than he used to do at Bonn; and he was dressed in a kind of uniform that rather became him. He was overjoyed at our arrival, and kissed K. I. and James on both cheeks, and made them look very much ashamed before all the people.

"Never was my poor castle so much honoured," said he, "since the king of—somewhere I forget—came to pass the night here with my ancestor, Conrad von Wolfenschäfer; and that was in the sixth century."

"Begad, it's easy to see you have had no Encumbered Estates Court," said K. I., "or you wouldn't be here to tell us that."

"My ancestor did not hold from the King," said he. "He was not what you call a vessel!"

K. I. laughed, and only said: "Faith, there's many of us mighty weak vessels, and very leaky besides."

After that he conducted us through two lines of his menials.

"I do detest to have so many 'detainers' "—he meant retainers. "I hope you are less annoyed in this respect."

"You don't dislike them more than I do," said K. I.; "the very name makes me shudder."

"How your Fader and I agree!" said he to Mary Anne. "We are one family already."

And we all laughed heartily as we went to our rooms. Every country has its own ways and habits, but I must say, Molly, that the furniture of these castles is very mean. There were two children's beds for K. I. and myself—at least they did not look longer than the beds in the nursery at home—with what K. I. called a swansdown poultice for coverlid; no curtains of any kind, and the pillows as big as a small mattress. Four oak chairs, and a looking-glass the size of your face, and a chest of drawers that wouldn't open, and that K. I. had to make serviceable by lifting off the marble slab on the top—this was all our room contained. There were old swords and pikes hung up in abundance, and a tree of the family history, framed and glazed, over the chimney—but these had little to do towards making the place comfortable.

"He's a good farmer, anyhow," said K. I., looking out of the window. "I didn't see such turnips since I left England."

"I suppose he has a good steward," said I, for I began to fear that K. I. would make some blunder, and speak to the Baron about crops, and so forth.

"Them drills are as neat as ever I seen," said he, half to himself.

"Look now, K. I." said I to him, gravely; "make your own remarks on whatever you like, but remember where we are, and that it's exactly the same as if we were on a visit to the Duke of Leinster at home. If you must ask questions about farming, always say—'How does your steward do this?' 'What does he think of that?' Keep in mind that the aristocracy doesn't dirty

its fingers abroad as it does in England, with agracultural pursuits, and that they have neither prizes for cows nor cottagers!"

"Mrs. D.," said he, turning on me like a tiger, "are you going to teach me polite breeding and genteel manners?"

"I wish to the saints I could," said I, "if the lesson was only good for a week."

"Look now," said he; "if I detect the slightest appearance of any drilling or training of me—if I ever find out that you want to impose me on the world for anything but what I am—may I never do any good if I don't disgrace you all by my behaviour!"

"Can you be worse?" said I.

"I can," said he; "a devilish deal worse."

And with that he went out of the room with a bang that nearly tore the door off its hinges, and never came back till late in the evening.

We apologised for his not appearing at dinner, by saying that he felt fatigued, and requested that he might be permitted to sleep on undisturbed; and as happily he did go to bed when he returned, the excuse succeeded.

So that you see, Molly, even in the midst of splendour and greatness, that man's temper, and the mean ways he has, keeps me in perpetual hot water. I know, besides, that when he is downright angry, he never cares for consequences, nor counts the damage of anything. He'd just go down and tell the Baron that we hadn't a sixpence we could call our own; that Dodsborough was mortgaged for three times its value; and that, maybe, to-morrow or next day we'd be sold out in the Cumbered Court. He'd expose me and Mary Anne without the slightest compunctuation, and there's not a family secret he wouldn't publish in the servants' hall!

Don't I remember well, when the 55th was quartered at Bruff, he used to boast at the mess that he couldn't give his daughters a farthing of fortune, when any man with proper feelings, and a respect for his position, would have made it seem that the girls had a snug thing quite at their own disposal. Isn't the world ready enough, Molly, to detect one's little failings and short-comings, without our going about to put them in the *Hue and Cry?* But that was always the way with K. I. He used to say, "It's no disgrace to us if we can't do this;" "It's no shame if we're not rich enough for that." But I say, it is both a shame and a disgrace *if it's found out*, Molly. That's the whole of it!

I used to think that coming abroad might have taught him something—that he'd see the way other people lived, and similate himself to their manners and customs. Not a bit of it. He grows worse every day. He's more of a Dodd now than the hour he left home. The consequence is, that the whole responsibility of supporting the credit of the family is thrown upon me and

Mary Anne. I don't mean to say that we are unequal to the task, but surely the whole burden needn't be laid upon our shoulders. That we are on the spot from which I write these lines, is all my own doing. When we first met the young Baron at Bonn, K. I. tried to prejudice us against him; he used to ridicule him to James and the girls, and went so far as to say that he was sure he was a low fellow!

What an elegant blunder we'd have made if we'd took his advice. It's all very fine saying he doesn't "look like this"—or he hasn't an "air of that;" sure nobody can be taken by his appearance abroad. The scrubbiest old snuffy creatures that go shambling about with shoes too big for them, airing their pocket-handkerchiefs in the sun, are Dukes or Marquises, and the elegantly dressed men in light blue frocks, all frogs and velvet, are just Bagmen or watering-place Doctors. It takes time, and great powers of discriminality, Molly, to divide the sheep from the goats; but I have got to that point at last, and I'm proud to say that he must be a really shrewd hand that imposes upon your humble servant.

Long as this letter is, I'd have made it longer if I had time, for though we're only a short time here, I have made many remarks to myself about the ways and manners of foreign country life. The post, however, only goes out once a week, and I don't wish to lose the occasion of giving you the first intelligence of where we are, what we are doing, and what's—with the Virgin's help—before us!

Up to this, it has been all hospitalities and the honours of the house, and I suppose, until the old Baron is up and able to see us, we'll hear no more about the marriage. At all events, you may mention the matter in confidence to Father John and Mrs. Clancey; and if you like to tell the Daviscs, and Tom Kelly, and Margaret, I'm sure it will be safe with them. You can state that the Baron is one of the first families in Europe, and the richest. His Great-Grandfather, or Mother, I forget which, was half-sister to the Empress of Poland, and he is related, in some way or other, to either the Grand Turk, or the Grand Duke of Moravia—but either will do to speak of.

All the cellars under the castle are, they say, filled with gold, in the rough, as it came out of his mines, and as he lives in what might be called an unostensible manner, his yearly savings is immense. I suppose while the old man lives the young couple will have to conform to his notions, and only keep a moderate establishment, but when the Lord takes him, I don't know Mary Anne if she'll not make the money fly. That I may be spared to witness that blessed day, and see my darling child in the enjoyment of every happiness, and all the pleasures of wealth, is the constant prayer of your faithful friend,

JEMIMA DODD.

P.S.—If Mary Anne has finished her sketch of the castle, I'll send it with this. She'd have done it yesterday, but unfortunately she hadn't a bit of red she wanted for a fisherman's small-clothes—for it seems they always wear red in a picture—and had to send down to the town, eleven miles, for it.

Address me still here when you write, and let it be soon.

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## LETTER IV.

KENNY JAMES DODD TO THOMAS PURCELL, ESQ., OF THE GRANGE, BRUFF.

The Castle of Wolfenfels.

MY DEAR TOM,—I'm glad old Molly has shown you Mrs. D.'s epistle, which, independent of its other claims, saves me all the trouble of explaining where we are, and how we came there. We arrived on Wednesday last, and since that have been living a very quiet, humdrum kind of monotonous life, which, were it in Ireland, we should call honestly, tiresome, but as the scene is Germany and the Black Forest, I suppose should be chronicled as highly romantic and interesting. To be plain, Tom, we inhabit a big house—they call it a castle—in the midst of a large expanse of maize and turnips, backed by a dense wood of pines. We eat and drink in a very plain sort of over-abundant and greasy fashion. We sleep in a thing like the drawer of a cabinet, with a large pincushion on our stomachs for covering. We smoke a home-grown weed, that has some of the bad properties of tobacco; and we ponder—at least I do—of how long it would take of an existence like this to make a man wish himself a member of the vegetable creation. Don't fancy that I'm growing exorbitant in my demands for pleasure and amusement, nor believe that I have forgotten the humdrum uniformity of my life at home. I remember it all, and well. I can recal the lazy hours passed in the sunshine of our few summer days—I can bring back to mind the wearisome watching of the rain, as it poured down for a spell of two months together, when we asked each other every morning, "What's to become of the wheat? How are we to get in the turf, if this lasts?" The newspapers, too, only alternated their narratives of outrage with flood, and spoke of bridges, mills, and mail-coaches being carried away in all directions. I mention these to show you that, though "far from the land," not a trait of it isn't green in my memory. But still, Tom, there was, so to say, a tone and a keeping in the picture, which is wanting here. Our home dulness impressed itself as a matter of

necessity, not choice. We looked out of our window at a fine red-brick mansion, two miles away—where we've drunk many a bottle of claret, and, in younger days, danced the "White Cockcade" till morning—and we see it a police-station, or mayhap a union. A starved dog dashes past the door with a hen in his mouth; we recognise him as the last remnant of poor Fetherstone's foxhounds, now broken up and gone. The smoke doesn't rise from the midst of the little copses of beech and alder, along the river side; no, the cabins are all roofless; and their once inhabitants are now in Australia, or toiling to enrich the commonwealth of America.

There is a stir and a movement going forward, it is true; but, unlike that which betokens the march of prosperity and gain, it only implies transition. Ay, Tom, all is changing around us. The gentry are going, the middle classes are going, and the peasant is going; some, of their free will; more, from hard necessity. I know that the general opinion is favourable to all this—in England at least. The cry is ever, "Ireland is improving—Ireland will be better." But my notion is, that by Ireland we should understand not alone the soil, the rocks, and the rivers, but the people—the heart, and soul, and life-blood that made the island the generous, warm-hearted, social spot we once knew it. Take away these, and I no longer recognise it as my country. What matters it to me if the Scotchman or the Norfolk farmer is to prosper where we only could exist? My sympathies are not with *him*. You might as well try and console me for the death of my child by showing me how comfortably some other man's boy could sleep in his bed. I want to see Ireland prosper with Irishmen; and I wish it, because I know in my heart the thing is possible and practicable.

I'm old enough—and, indeed, so are you—to remember when the English used to be satisfied to laugh at our blunders and our bulls, and ridicule our eccentricities; but the spirit of the times is changed, and now they've taken to rail at us, and abuse us, as if we were the greatest villains in Europe. They assume the very tone the Yankee adopts to the Red Man, and frankly, say, "You must be extirpated!" Hence the general flight that you now witness. Men naturally say, "Why cling to a land that is no longer secure to us? Why link our destinies to a soil that may be denied to us to-morrow?" And the English will be sorry for this yet. Take my word for it, Tom, they'll rue it! Paddy, by reason of his poverty and his taste for adventure, and a touch of romance in his nature, was always ready to enlist. He didn't know what might not turn out of it. He knew that Wellington was an Irishman, and, faith, he had only to read very little to learn that most of the best men came from the same country. Luck might, then, stand to him, and, at all events, it wasn't a bad change from fourpence a day, stone-breaking!

Now, John Bull took another view of it. *He* was better off at home. He hadn't a spark of adventure about him. His only notion of worldly advance-

ment led through money. You'll not catch him becoming a soldier. Every year will make him less and less disposed to the life. Cheapen food and luxuries, reduce tariffs and the cost of foreign produce, and the labourer will think twice before he'll give up home and its comforts, to be, as the song says,

> Proud as a goat,
> With a fine scarlet coat,
> And a long cap and feather!

Turn over these things in your mind, Tom, and see if England has not made a great mistake in eradicating the very class she might have reckoned upon in any warlike emergency. Take my word for it, it is a fine thing to have at your disposal a hundred thousand fellows who can esteem a shilling a day a high premium, and who are not too well off in the world to be afraid of leaving it! How did I come here at all? What has led me into this digression? I protest to you solemnly, Tom, I don't know. I can only say, that my hand trembles, and my head throbs with indignation, as I think over this insolent cant, that tells us that Ireland has no chance of prosperity save in ceasing to be Irish. It is worse than a lie — it is a mean, cowardly slander!

I must leave off this till my brain is calmer; besides, whether it is the light wines I'm drinking, or my anger has brought it on, but I've just got a terrible twinge of gout in my right foot.

Tuesday Evening.

I have passed a miserable twenty-four hours. They've all the incentives to gout in this country, and yet they don't appear to have the commonest remedies against it. I sent Belton's recipe to be made up at the apothecaries', and they had never as much as heard of one of the ingredients! They told me to regulate my diet, and be careful to avoid acids—and this, while I was bellowing like a bull with pain. It was like replying to my request for a shirt, by saying that they were going to sow flax in August. It's their confounded cookery, and the vinegar we wash it down with, has given me this!

The old housekeeper at last took compassion on my sufferings, and made me up a kind of broth of herbs that nearly finished me. She assured me that they all grew wild in the fields, and were freely eaten by the cattle. I can only say it's well that Nebuchadnezzar wasn't put out to graze here! Sea-sickness was a mild nausea compared to it. I'm better now; but so low, and so depressed, and with such loss of energy, that in a discussion with Mrs. D. about Mary Anne's "trousseau," as they call it, I gave in to everything!

Since this attack seized me, events have made great progress; indeed, a

suspiciously minded person wouldn't scruple to say that a mild poison had been administered to me to forward the course of negotiations; and in my heart and soul I believe that another bowl of the same broth would make me consent to my daughter's union with the Bey of Tunis! The poor old Dean of Lurra used to say of the Baths of Kreutznach, "I've lost enough flesh in three weeks to make a curate!"—and, indeed, when I look at myself in the glass, I turn involuntarily around to see where's the rest of me!

Meanwhile, as I said, all has been arranged and settled, and the marriage is fixed for an early day in the coming week. I suppose it's all for the best. I take it that the match is a very great one; but I own to you frankly, Tom, I'd have fewer misgivings if the dear child was going to be the wife of some respectable man of her own country, though he had neither a castle to live in, nor a title to bestow.

Foreigners are essentially and totally different from us in everything; and marrying one of them is, to my thinking, the very next thing to being united to some strange outlandish beast, as one reads of in Fairy Tales. I suppose that my prejudice is a very mean and narrow-minded one; but I can't get rid of it. It looks churlish and cold-hearted in me, that I cannot show the same joy on the occasion that the others display; but with all my efforts, and the very best will, I can't do it, Tom. The bridegroom, too, is not to my taste: he is one of those moping, dreamy, moonstruck fellows, that pass their lives in an imaginary sphere of thought and action; and to *my* thinking, these people are distasteful to the world at large, and insufferable to their wives.

I think I see that Mary Anne already anticipates he will prove a stubborn subject. Her Mother, however, gives her courage and support. She gently insinuates, too, that worse cases have been treated successfully. Lord help us, it's a strange world!

As to the material features of the affair—I mean as regards means and fortune—he appears to have more than enough, yet not so much as to prevent his giving a very palpable hint to me about what I intended to give my daughter. He made the overture with a most laudable candour, though, I own, with no excess of delicacy. James, however, had in a manner prepared me for it, and mentioned that I was indebted for this gratification, as I am for a variety of others, to Mrs. D. It seems that, by way of giving a very imposing notion of our possessions, she had cut the county map out of O'Kelly's old Gazetteer, and passed it off for the survey of our estate. Of course I couldn't disavow the statement, and have been reduced to the pleasant alternative of settling on my daughter about five baronies and twenty town-lands of Tipperary, with no inconsiderable share of villages and hamlets. Some old leases, an insurance policy, and a writ against myself! have served me for title-deeds; and though the young Baron pores over them for hours

with a dictionary, thanks to the figurative language of the law, they have defied detection!

The Father is still too ill to receive me, but each day I am promised an interview with him. Of what benefit to either of us it is to prove, may be guessed from the fact that we cannot speak to each other. You will perceive from all this, Tom, that I am by no means enamoured of our approaching greatness; and it is but fair to state that James is even less so. He calls the Baron a "snob;" and probably, in all the fashionable vocabulary of an enlightened age, a more depreciatory epithet could not be discovered. What a sham and a humbug is all the parade we make of our parental affection, and what a gross cheat, too, do we practise upon ourselves by it! We train up a girl from infancy with every care and devotedness—we surround her with all the luxuries our means can compass, and every affection of our hearts—and we give her away, for "better and for worse," to the first fellow that offers with what seems a reasonable chance of being able to support her!

Many of us wouldn't take a butler with the scanty knowledge we accept a son-in-law. His moral qualities, his disposition, the habits he has been reared in—what do we know of them? Less than nothing! And yet, while we ask about these, and twenty more, of the man to whom we are about to confide the key of our cellar, we entrust the happiness of our child to an unknown individual, the only ascertained fact about whom—if even that be so—is, his income!

As I should like to tell you every step I take in this affair, I'll not send off my letter till I can give you the latest information. Meanwhile, let me impress upon you that it is now three months since I received a shilling from Ireland. James has just informed me that there is not fifty pounds left of the M'Carthy legacy, of which his Mother only gave him permission to draw for three hundred. The debate upon this, when it comes, will be strong. What I intend is, that immediately after Mary Anne's marriage we should return to Ireland; but of course I reserve the declaration for a fitting opportunity, since I well know how it will be received. Cary would never marry a foreigner, nor would anything induce me to consent to her doing so. James is only frittering away his best years here in idleness and dissipation; and if I can get nothing for him from the Government, he must emigrate to Australia or New Zealand. As for Mrs. D., the sooner she gets home to Dodsborough, the better for her health, her means, and her morals!

I am afraid to say a word about Ireland and Irish affairs, for as sure as I do I stick fast there; still I must say that I think you're wrong for abusing those members that have accepted office from Government. Put it to yourself, my dear Tom: if anybody offered you fifty pounds for the old grey mare you drive into market of a Saturday, would you set about explaining that she

was blind of an eye, and a roarer, with a splint before, and a spavin behind? Wouldn't you rather expatiate upon her blood and breeding, her endurance of fatigue, and her fine trotting action? I don't know you if you wouldn't! Well, it's just the same with these fellows. Briefless lawyers and distressed gentlemen as they are, why should they say to the Ministry, "You're giving too much for us; we can neither speak for you nor write for you; we have neither influence at home, nor power abroad; we are a noisy, riotous, disorderly set of devils, always quarrelling amongst ourselves, and never agreeing, except when there's a bit of robbery or roguery to be done; don't think of buying *us;* it is a clear waste of public money; we'd only disgrace and not benefit you?" If anybody is to be blamed, it is the Ministers that bought them, Tom.

As to all your disputed questions of Education, Tenant-right, and Taxation, take my word for it you have no chance of settling them amicably, and for this reason: a great number of excellent men, on both sides, have pledged themselves so strongly to particular opinions, that they cannot decently recant, and yet they begin to see many points in a different view, and would, were the matter to come fresh before them, treat it in another fashion. If you really wish to see Ireland better, try and get people to let her alone for some fifteen or twenty years. She is nearly ruined by doctoring. Just wait a bit, and see if the natural goodness of constitution won't do more for her than all your nostrums.

James has just interrupted me, to say that he has shot "the partridge," for it seems there was only one in the country. That's the fruits of revolution. Before the year '48, this part of Germany abounded in game of every sort—partridges, hares, and quails, in immense abundance, besides plenty of deer on the hills, and that excellent bird the "Auer-Hahn," which is like the black-cock we have at home. When the troubles came, the peasants shot everything; and now the whole breed of game is extinct. They tell me it is the same throughout Bohemia and Hungary—the two best sporting countries in all Europe. Foreigners were never oppressed with game-laws as we are; there was a far wider liberty enjoyed by them in this respect, and, in consequence, the privileges were less abused; so that really the wholesale destruction is much to be regretted. But is it not exactly what always follows in every case of popular domination? The masses love excess, and are never satisfied with anything short of it. I don't pretend to say that the Germans had not good and valid reasons for being dissatisfied with their Governments. I believe, in my heart, it would be difficult to imagine a more stupid piece of ingenuous blundering than a German Administration; and this is the less excusable when one thinks of the people over whom they rule.

The excesses of that same year of '48 will be the stock-in-trade for these grinding Governments for many a day to come. It is like a "barring out" to a cruel schoolmaster: the excuse for any violence he may wish to indulge

in. At the same time I say this, I tell you frankly that none of the foreigners I have yet seen are fit for the system of a representative Government. From whatever causes I know not, but they are less patient, less given to calm investigation than the English. Their perceptions are as quick—perhaps quicker—but they will not weigh the consequences of conflicting interests, and above all, they will not put any restrictions upon their own liberty for the benefit of the community at large. Their origin, climate, traditions, and so forth, of course influence them greatly; but I have a notion, Tom, that our domesticity has a very considerable share in the formation of that temperate and obedient spirit so observable amongst us. I think I see the sly dimple that's deepening in the corner of your mouth as you murmur to yourself, "Kenny James is thinking of his Mrs. D. He's pondering over the natural results of home discipline." But that is not what I mean, at least it is not the whole of it. My theory is, that a family is the best training-school for the virtues that prosper in a well-ordered State, and that the little incidents of home life have a wonderful bearing upon, and similarity to, the great events that stir mankind!

I was going to become very abstruse and incomprehensible, I've no doubt, on this theme, but Mrs. D. just dropped in with a small catalogue of some three hundred and twenty-one articles Mary Anne requires for her wedding.

I ventured to hint that her Mother entered the connubial state with a more modest preparation; and hereupon arose one of those lively discussions now so frequent between us, in which, amidst other desultory and miscellaneous remarks, she drew a graphic contrast between marrying a man of rank and title, and "making a low connexion that has for ever served to alienate the affection of one's family."

Will you tell me what peculiarity there is in the atmosphere, or the food, or the electric influences abroad, that have made a woman, that was at least occasionally reasonable at home, a most unmanageable fury on the Continent? I don't want to deny that we had our little differences at Dodsborough, but they were "tiffs"—mere skirmishes—but here they are downright pitched battles, Tom. She will have it so, too. She won't exchange a few shots and retire, but she comes up in line, with her heavy artillery, and seems resolved to have a day of it! If this blessed tour brought me no other pleasures than these, I'd have reason to thank it! You, of course, are quite ready to assert that the fault is as much mine as hers—that I provoke contradiction—that I even invite conflict! There, you are perfectly in the wrong! I do, I acknowledge, entrench myself in a strong position, and only fire an occasional shot at any tempting exposure of the enemy; but she comes on by storm and escalade, and, sparing neither age nor sex, never stops till she's in the very heart of the citadel. That I come out maimed, crippled, and disabled from such encounters, is not to be wondered at.

Amongst the other signs of progress of our enlightened age, a very re-

markable one is the habit, now become a law, for everybody with any pretensions to the rank of a gentleman, to live in the same style, or, at least, with as close an imitation as he can of it, as persons of large fortune. Men like myself were formerly satisfied with giving their friends a little sherry and port at dinner, continned afterwards, till some considerate friend begged, "as a favour," for a glass of punch. Now we start with Madeira after the soup, if you haven't had oysters and chablis before, hock with your first entrée, and champagne afterwards, graduating into Chambertin with "the roast," and Pacquarete with the dessert, claret, at double the price it costs in Ireland, closing the entertainment. Why, a Duke cannot do more than Kenny Dodd at this rate! To be sure the cookery will be more refined, and the wines in higher condition. Moët will be iced to its due point, and Château Margaux will be served in a carefully aired decanter; but the cost, the outlay, will be fully as much in one case as the other. Have we—that is to say, humble men like myself—gained by this in an intellectual or social point of view? Not a bit of it! We have lost all that easy cordiality that was native to us in our former condition, and we have not become as coldly polite and elegantly tiresome as the grand folk.

The same system obtains in other matters. *My* daughter must be dressed on her wedding-day like Lady Olivia or Lady Jemima, who has a father a Marquis, and fifty thousand pounds settled on her for pin-money.

The whole globe has to become tributary to the marriage of Mary Anne! Cashmere sends a shawl; Lyons, silk; and Genoa, velvet; furs from Hudson's Bay, and feathers from Mexico; Valenciennes and Brussels contribute lace; Paris reserving for her peculiar share the architectural skill that is to combine these costly materials, and construct out of them that artistic being they call a "bride." Taking a wife with nothing "but the clothes on her back," used to be the expression of a most disinterested marriage. Now, it might mean anything between Swan and Edgar's and Howell and James's, or, to state it differently, between moderate embarrassment and irretrievable ruin!

If you ask me how I am to pay for all this, or when? I tell you honestly and fairly, I don't know. As well as I can make out the last accounts you sent me, we're getting deeper into debt every day; but as figures always distract and puzzle me, I'd rather you'd put the case into something like a statement in words, just saying when we may expect a remittance, and how much it will be. I find that I shall lose the mail if I don't close this at once; but I'll send you a few lines by to-morrow's post, as I have something important to say, but can't remember it now.

Yours, ever sincerely,

KENNY JAMES DODD.

## LETTER V.

KENNY JAMES DODD TO THOMAS PURCELL, ESQ., OF THE GRANGE, BRUFF.

My dear Tom,—The post hadn't left this five minutes yesterday, when I remembered what I wanted to say to you. Wednesday, the 26th, is fixed for the happy occasion; and if nothing should intervene, you may insert the following paragraph in the *Tipperary Press*, under the accustomed heading of "Marriage in High Life:"—"The Baron Adolf Heinrich Conrad Hapsburg von Wolfenschäfer, Lord of the Manors of Hohendeken, Kalbsbratenhausen, and Schweinkraut, to Mary Anne, eldest daughter of Kenny James Dodd, Esq., of Dodsborough, in this county." Faith, Tom, I was near saying "universally regretted by a large circle of afflicted survivors," for I was just wishing myself dead and buried! But you must put it in the usual formula of "beautiful and accomplished," and take care it is not applied to the bridegroom, for, upon my conscience, his claim to the first epithet couldn't be settled by even a Parliamentary title! My heart is heavy about it all, and I wish it was over!

If anything exemplifies the vanity of human wishes, it is our efforts to marry our daughters, and our regrets when the plans succeed. Tom goes to India, and Billy to sea, and there is scarcely a gap in the family circle. "The boys" were seldom at home—they were shooting in Scotland, or hunting in England, or fishing in Norway. They never, so to say, made part of the effective garrison of the house; they came and went with that rackety good-humour that even in quiet families is pleasurable; but your girls are household gods: lose *them*, even one of them, and the altar is despoiled. The thousand little unobtrusive duties, noiseless cares, that make home better a hundred-fold than anywhere else, be it ever so rich and splendid, the unasked solicitude, the watchful attention that provides for your little daily wants and habits, are all *their* province. And just fancy, then, what scheming and intriguing we practise to get rid of them! You'll say that this shows we are above the selfishness of only considering our own enjoyment, and that we sacrifice all for their happiness. There you mistake; our sole aim is a rich man—our one notion of a good marriage is, that the husband be wealthy. It's not a man like myself, who has sometimes paid fifty, ay, sixty per cent. for money, that can afford to sneer at and despise it; but this I will say, that the mere possession of it will not suffice for happiness. I know fellows with

fifteen thousand a year that have not the heart to spend five hundred. I know others, that with as much, are always over head and ears in debt, raising cash everywhere, and anyhow! What kind of life must a girl lead that marries either of these? And yet would you or I think of refusing such a match for a daughter? Let me tell you, Tom, that for people of small fortune, the Nunneries were fine things! What signifies serge and simple diet to the wearisome drudgery of a governess. If I was a woman, I think I'd rather sit in my quiet cell, working an embroidered suit of body clothes for Father O'Leary, than I'd be snubbed by the family of some vulgar citizen, tortured by the brats, and insulted by the servants.

I don't suppose that it signifies a straw one way or other, but I feel some compunctions of conscience at the way I have been assigning imaginary estates, mines, woods, and collieries, to Mary Anne, for the last three days. I know it's mere greed makes the Baron so eager on the subject, since he is enormously wealthy. James and I rode twelve miles, this morning, through a forest that belongs to the Castle, and the arable land stretches more than that distance in another direction; but who knows how he'll behave when he discovers she has nothing! To be sure, we can always ascribe our ruin to political causes, and, in verification, exhibit ourselves as poor as need be; but still I don't like it. And this is one of the blessed results of a false position—one step in a wrong direction very frequently necessitates a long journey. Yesterday, I protested to my affluence; to-day, I vouched for the nobility of my family. Heaven only can tell what I won't swear to to-morrow! And again I am interrupted by Mrs. D., who has just come to inform me that though the bride's finery can all be had at Paris—whither the happy couple are to repair for the honeymoon—there are certain indispensables must be obtained at once from Baden; and she begs that I will privately write a few lines to Morris, who will, of course, undertake the commission. It is not without shame that I enclose a list of purchases to make, which, to a man who knew what we were in Ireland, will appear preposterous; but the false position we have attained to is surrounded with interminable mortifications of the same kind.

Ah, Tom! I remember the time when, if a bride changed her smart white silk and muslin that she wore at the altar for a good brown or blue satin pelisse to travel in, we thought her a miracle of fashion and finery; but now the millinery of a wedding is the principal thing. There is a stereotyped formula, out of which there is no hope of conjugal happiness; and the bride that begins life without Brussels lace enters upon her career with gloomy omens! Now, a scarf of this alone costs thirty guineas; you may, if you like, go as high as a hundred and fifty. Why can't people wait for the ruin that's so sure to overtake them, without forestalling it in this way? Twenty pounds for clothes, and a trip to Castle Connel or Kilkee for the honeymoon,

would have satisfied every wish of Mary Anne's heart in Ireland; and if she drove away in a post-chaise with four horses for the first stage, she'd have been the envy of all the marriageable girls for miles round.

But now I have had to ask Morris to buy a travelling carriage, because Mrs. D., in one of those expansions of splendour that occasionally attack her, said to the Baron, "Oh, take one of our carriages, we have left several of them at Baden." The excellent woman cannot be brought to perceive that romance of this kind is a most expensive amusement. I have drawn a bill on you for four hundred at three months, to meet these, and sent it to Morris to "get done." I hope he'll succeed, and I hope you'll pay it when it comes due; so that come what will, Tom, my intentions are honourable!

If Mrs. D. and myself had been upon better terms, we might have discussed this marriage question more fully and confidentially, but there are now so many cabinet difficulties, that we rarely hold a council, and when we do, we are sure to disagree. This is another blessed result of our continentalising. Home had its duties, and with them came that spirit of concord and agreement so essential to family happiness; but in this vagabond kind of existence, where everything is feigned, unreal, and unnatural, all concert and confidence is completely lost!

Now I have told you frankly and fairly everything about us, and don't take advantage of my candour by giving advice, for there is nothing in this world I have so little taste for. There's no man above the condition of an idiot that isn't thoroughly aware of his failings and short-comings, but all that knowledge doesn't bring him an inch nearer the cure of them. Do you think I'm not fully alive to everything you could say of my wasteful habits, my improvidence, indolence, irritability, and so forth? I know them all better than you do—ay, and I feel them acutely, too, for I know them to be incurable! Reformation, indeed! Do you know when a man gives up dancing, Tom? When he's too stiff in the knees for it. There's the whole philosophy of life. When we grow wiser, as they are pleased to call it, it is always in spite of ourselves!

I find that by enclosing this to Morris, he can forward it to you by the bag of the Legation. Once more let me remind you of our want of cash, and believe me, very faithfully your friend,

KENNY I. DODD.

P.S.—Address me "Freyburg, to be forwarded to the Schloss, Wolfenfels."

## LETTER VI.

BETTY COBB TO MRS. SHUSAN O'SHEA, PRIEST'S HOUSE, BRUFF.

DEAR MRS. SHUSAN,—I was meaning to write to you for the last week, but couldn't by reason of the conflagration I was in, for sure any poor girl might feel it, seeing that I was far away among furriners, and had nobody to advise, barrin' the evil counsels of my wicked heart. We cam here two weeks gone, on a visit to the father of the young man that's going to marry "Mary Anne." It's a great big ould place, like the jail at Limerick, only darker, with little windows, and a flite of stairs out of every corner in it. And the furnishing isn't a bit newer. It's a bit of rag here and a rag there, an ould cabbinet, a hard sofia, and maybe four wooden chairs that would take a ladder to get into! Eatin' and drinkin' likewise the same. Biled beef—biled first for the broth, and sarved afterwards with cow-comers, sliced, and steeped in oil—the Heavens preserve us! Then a dish of roast vale, with rasberry jam and musheroons, for they tries the human stomich with every ingradiant they can think of!

But the great favourite of all is a salad made out of potatoes, biled hard, sliced and pickled the same way as the cow-comers! A bowl of that, Mrs. Shusan, after a long dinner, makes you feel as full as a tick, and if the house was a-fire I couldn't run! To be sure, when the meal is over everybody sits down to coffee, and doesn't distress themselves about anything for a matter of two hours. And, indeed, I must make the remark that "manials" isn't as badly treated anywhere in the whole 'versal globe as in Ireland, and if it wasn't that I hear the people is runnin' away o' themselves, I'd write a letter to the papers about it! 'Tis exactly like pigs you are, no better; potatoes and butter-milk all the year round! deny it if you can. Could you offer a pig less wages than four pound a year?

I must say, too, Shusan, that eatin' one's fill molly-fies ther nature, and subdues ther hasty dispositions in a wonderful way; I know it myself; and that after a strong supper now I can bear more from the Mistress than I used at home, only giving a sigh now and then out of the fulness of my heart. But it's not them things I wanted to tell you, but of the state of my infections. Don't be angry with me, Mrs. Shusan. I don't forget the iligant lessons you gave me long ago, about thrusting the men; I know well how thrue every word you said is. They're base, and wicked, and deceatful!

Flatterin' us when we're young and beautiful, and gibin' and jeerin' when we're ould as yourself! But what's the use of fiting agin the will of Providence? Sure, if he intended us to have better husbands it's not them craytures he'd have left us to! My sentiments is these, Shusy: 'Tis a way of chastezin' us is marriage! The throubles and tumults we have with a man are our crosses, and it's only cowardly to avoid them. Meet your feat, say I, whatever it be—whether it be a man or the measles, don't be afraid!

I'm shure and sartain it's nothing but fear makes young girls go and be nuns; they're afraid, and no wonder, of the wickedness of the world; but somehow, Shusan, like everything else in this life, one gets used to it. I know it well, there's many a thing I see now, without minding, that long ago I dared not look at. "Live and learn," they say, and there's nothing so thrue! And talking of that, you'd be shocked to see how Mary Anne goes on wid the young Baron. She, that would scarce let poor Doctor Belton spake to her alone. We meet them walkin' in the lonesomest places together; and Taddy and I never goes into the far part of the wood without seeing them! And that's not all of it, my dear, but she must get the Mistress to give me a lecture about going off myself with a man.

"Doesn't your daughter do it, Ma'am?" says I. "Is all the wickedness of this world," says I, "to be kept for one's betters?"

"Do you call marriage wickedness?" says she.

"Sometimes it is, Ma'am," says I, with a look she understood well.

"You're a hussy," says she; "and I'll give you warnin' next Saturday."

"I'll take it now," says I, "Ma'am, for I'm going to better myself."

If ye saw her face, Shusy, as I said this! She knows in her heart that she couldn't get on at all without me. Not a word of a furrin lingo can she say; and I'm obleeged to traduce her meanin' to all the other sarvants! And, indeed, that's the way I become such an iligant linguist; and it's no differ to me now between talkin' French and Jarman—I make them just the same!

I wasn't in my room when Mary Anne was after me.

"Ain't you a fool, Betty?" says she, puttin' a hand on my shoulder.

"Maybe I am, Miss," says I; "but there's others fools as well as me!"

"But I mean," says she, "isn't it silly to fall out with Mamma—that was always so good, and so kind, and so fond of you?"

I saw at once, Shusy, how the wind was, and so I just went on, folding up my collars and settling my things without a word.

"I'm sure," says she, "you couldn't leave her in a far-away country like this!"

"The dearest friends must part, Miss," says I.

"Not to speak of your own desolate and deserted condition," says she.

"There's them that won't lave me dissolute and disconsoled, Miss," says

I. And with that, Shusy, I told her that Taddy Hetzler had made me honourable proposials.

"But you'd not think of Taddy," says she. "He's only a herd," says she.

"We must take what we can get, Miss," says I, "and be thankful, in this life."

And she blushed red up to the eyes, Shusy; for she knew well what I meant by *that!*

"But a nice girl, and a purty girl like you, Betty," says she, "*sleudering*" me, "isn't it throwing yourself away? sure, ye have only to wait a little to make an iligant match here on the Continent. Don't be precipitouous," says she, "but see the effect you'll make with that beautiful pink gownd;" and here, Shusan, she gave me all as one as a bran new silk of the Mistress's, with five flounces, and lace trimmins down the front! It's what they call glassy silk, and shines like it!

"I'm sorry, Miss," says I, "that as I took the Mistress's warnin', I'm obleeged to refuse you."

"Nonsense, Betty," says she; "I'll arrange all that."

"But my feelins, Miss—my feelins."

"Well, I'll even engage to smoothe these," says she, laughing.

And so, Shusy, I had to laugh too; for my nature is always to be easy and complyiant; and when anybody means well to me, they can do what they plaze with me. It's a weak part in my character, but I can't help it. "I'm not able to be selfish, Miss Mary Anne," says I.

"No, Betty, *that* you are not," says she, patting my cheek.

But for all that, Shusy, I'm not going to give up Taddy till I know why—tho' I didn't say so to her. So I just put up the pink gownd in my drawer, and went up and told the Mistress I'd stay; but begged she wouldn't try my nerves that way another time, for my constitution wouldn't bear repated shocks. I saw she was burstin' to say something, but darn't, Shusy, and she tore a lace cuff to tatters while I was talkin'. Well, well, there's no denyin' it anyhow: manials has many troubles, but they can give a great deal of annoyance and misery, if they set about it right. You'd like to hear about Taddy, and I'll be candid and own that he isn't what would be called handsome in Ireland, though here he is reckoned a fine-looking man. He is six foot four and a half, without shoes, a little bent in the shoulders, has long red hair, and sore eyes; that cums from the snow, for he's out in all weathers—after the pigs. You're surprised at that, and well you may; for instead of keeping the craytures in a house as we do, and giving them all the filth we can find to eat, they turns them out wild into the woods, to eat beech-nuts, and acorns, and chesnuts; and the beasts grow so wicked, that it's not safe for a stranger to go near them; and even the man that guides them they

call a "swine-fearer."* Taddy is one of these; and when he's dressed in a goat-skin coat and cap, leather gaiters buttoned on his legs, and reachin' to the hips, and a long pole, with an iron hook and a hatchet at the end of it, and a naked knife, two feet long, at his side, you'd think the pigs would be more likely to be afraid of *him!* Indeed, the first time I saw him come into the kitchen, with a great hairy dog they call a fang-hound at his heels, I schreeched out with frite, for I thought them—God forgive me!—the ugliest pare I ever set eyes on. To be sure, the green shade he wore over his eyes, and the beard that grew down to his breast, didn't improve him; but I've trimmed him up since that; and it's only a slight squint, and two teeth that sticks out at the side of his mouth, that I can't remedy at all!

Paddy Byrne spends his time mockin' him, and makin' pictures of him on the servants' hall with a bit of charcoal. It well becomes a dirty little spalpeen like him to make fun of a man four times his size. His notion of manly beauty is four foot eight, short legs, long breeches and gaiters, with a waistcoat over the hips, and a Jim Crow! A monkey is graceful compared to it!

Taddy is not much given to tälkin', but he has told me that he has been on the estate, "with the pigs," he calls it, since he was eight years old; and, as he said another time, that "he was nine-and-twenty years a herd," you can put the two together, and it makes him out thirty-three or thirty-four years of age. He never had any father or mother, which is a great advantage, and, as he remarks, "it's the same to him if there came another Flood and drowned all the world to-morrow!"

Our plans is, to live here till we can go and take a bit of land for ourselves, and as Taddy has saved something, and has very good idais about his own advantage, I trust, with the blessin' of the Virgin, that we'll do very well. This that I tell you now, Shusan, is all in confidence, because to the neighbours, and to Sam Healey, you can say that I am going to be married to a rich farmer that has more pigs—and that's thrue—than ye'd see in Ballinasloe Fair.

What distresses me most of all is, I can't make out what religion he's of, if he has any at all! I try him very hard about penance and 'tarnal punishments, but all he says is, "When we're married I'll know all about that."

As the Mistress writ all about Mary Anne's marriage to Mrs. Gallagher, at the house, I don't say anything about it; but he's an ugly crayture, Shusan dear, and there's a hang-dog, treach'rous look about him I wonder any young girl could like. The servants, too, knows more of him than they lets on, but, by rayson of their furrin language, there's no coming at it.

* Perhaps the accomplished Betty has been led into this pardonable mistake from the sound of the German epithet "Schwein-führer."—*Editor of "Dodd Correspondence."*

Between ourselves, she doesn't take to the marriage at all, for I seen her twice cryin' in her room over some ould letters; but she bundled them up whin she seen me, and tried to laugh.

"I wonder, Betty," says she, "will I ever see Dodsborough again!"

"Who knows, Miss," says I; "but it would be a pity if you didn't, and so many there that's fond of you!"

"I don't believe it," says she, sharp. "I don't believe there's one cares a bit about me!"

"Baithershin!" says I, mocking.

"Who does?" says she; "can ye tell me even one?"

"Sure there's Miss Davis," says I, "and the Kellys, and there's Miss Kitty Doolan, and ould Molly, not to spake of Dr. Bel——"

"There, do not speak of him," says she, getting red; "the very names of the people make me shudder. I hope I'll never see one of them."

Now, Shusan dear, I told you all that it's in my mind, and hope you'll write to me the same. If you could send me the grey cloak with the blue linin', and the bayver bonnet I wore last winter two years, they'd be useful to me here, and you could tell the neighbours that it was new clothes you were sendin' me for my weddin'. Be sure ye tell me how Sam Healey bears it. Tell him from me, with my regards, that I hope he won't take to drink, and desthroy his constitution.

You can write to me still as before, to your attached and true friend,

BETTY COBB.

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## LETTER VII.

KENNY I. DODD TO THOMAS PURCELL, ESQ., OF THE GRANGE, BRUFF.

Constance, Switzerland.

MY DEAR TOM,—Before passion gets the better of me, and I forget all about it, let me acknowledge the welcome arrival of your post bill for one hundred, but for which, Heaven knows in what additional embarrassment I might now be in. You will see, by the address, that I am in Switzerland. How we came here I'll try and explain, if Providence grants me patience for the effort; this being the third time I have addressed myself to the task unsuccessfully.

I need not refer to the situation in which my last letter to you left us. You may remember that I told you of the various preparations that were then in progress for a certain auspicious event, whose accomplishment was fixed for

the ensuing week. Amongst others, I wrote to Morris for some articles of dress and finery to be procured at Baden, and for, if possible, a comfortable travelling-carriage, with a sufficiency of boxes and imperials.

Of course in doing so it was necessary, or at least it was fitting, that I should make mention of the cause for these extraordinary preparations, and I did so by a very brief allusion to the coming event, and to the rank of my future son-in-law, the youthful Baron and heir of Wolfenfels. I am not aware of having said much more than this, for my letter was so crammed with commissions, and catalogues of purchases, that there was little space disposable for more intelligence. I wrote on a Monday, and on the following Wednesday evening I was taking a stroll with James through the park, chatting over the approaching event in our family, when a mounted postboy galloped up with a letter, which being marked "Most pressing and immediate," the postmaster had very properly forwarded to me with all expedition. It was in Morris's hand, and very brief. I give it to you verbatim:

"My dear Sir,—For Heaven's sake do not advance another step in this affair. You have been grossly imposed upon. As soon as I can procure horses I will join you, and expose the most scandalous trick that has ever come to the knowledge of yours truly,

"E. Morris.

"Post-house, Tite See. 2 o'clock p.m., Wednesday."

You may imagine—*I* cannot attempt to describe—the feelings with which James and I read and re-read these lines. I suppose we had passed the letter back and forwards to each other fully a dozen times, ere either of us could summon composure to speak.

"Do you understand it, James?" said I.

"No," said he. "Do *you?*"

"Not unless the scoundrel is married already," said I.

"That was exactly what had occurred to *me*," replied he. "'Most scandalous trick,' are the words; and they can only mean that."

"Morris is such a safe fellow—so invariably sure of whatever he says."

"Precisely the way I take it," cried James. "He is far too cautious to make a grave charge without ample evidence to sustain it! We may rely upon it that he knows what he is about."

"But bigamy is a crime in Germany. They send a fellow to the galleys for it," said I. "Is it likely that he'd put himself in such peril?"

"Who knows!" said James, "if he thought he was going to get an English girl of high family, and with a pot of money!"

Shall I own to you, Tom, that remark of James's nearly stunned me—carelessly and casually as it fell from *him*, it almost overwhelmed *me*, and I

asked myself, Why should he think she was of high family? Why should he suppose she had a large fortune? Who was it that propagated these delusions? and if there really was a "scandalous trick," as Morris said, could I affirm that all the roguery was on one side? Could I come into court with clean hands, and say, "Mrs. Dodd has not been cheating, neither has Kenny James!" Where are these broad acres of arable and pasture—these verdant forests and swelling lawns, that I have been bestowing with such boundless munificence? How shall we prove these fourteen quarterings that we have been quoting incessantly for the past three weeks? "No matter for *that*," thought I, at length. "If the fellow has got another wife, I'll break every bone in his skin!" I must have pondered this sentiment aloud, for James echoed it even more forcibly, adding, by way of sequel, "And kick him from this to Rotterdam!"

I mention this in detail to show that we both jumped at once to the same conclusion, and having done so, never disputed the correctness of our guess. We now proceeded to discuss our line of action, James advising that he should be "brought to book" at once—I overruling the counsel by showing that we could do nothing whatever till Morris arrived.

"But to-morrow is fixed for the wedding?" exclaimed James.

"I know it," said I, "and Morris will be here to-night. At all events, the marriage shall not take place till he comes."

"I'd charge him with it on the spot," cried James. "I'd tell him, in plain terms, the information had come to me from an authority of unimpeachable veracity, and to refute it if he could."

"Refute what?" said I. "Don't you see, boy, that we really are not in possession of any single fact—we have not even an allegation."

I assure you, Tom, that I had to make him read the note over again, word by word, before he was convinced of the case.

As we walked back to the castle we talked over the affair, and turned it in every possible shape, both of us agreeing that we could not, with any safety, entrust our intelligence to the womankind.

"We'll watch him," said James; "we'll keep an eye on him, and wait for Morris."

I own to you my feelings distressed me to that degree I could scarcely enter the house, and as to appearing at supper it was clean out of the question. How could I bring myself to accept the shelter of a man's roof against whom I harboured the very worst suspicions! Could I be Judas enough to sit down at table with one against whom I was hatching exposure and shame! It was bad enough to think that my wife and daughter were there. As for James, he took his place at the board with such an expression in his features that I verily believe *Banquo* looked a pleasanter guest at *Macbeth's* banquet.

*I* betook myself to the terrace, and walked there till midnight, watching with eye and ear towards the road that led from Freyburg.

"Night or Blucher!" said the Duke on the memorable field at Waterloo; but there was the blessing of an alternative in *his* case. *Mine* had none. It was Morris or nothing with *me*. And now I began anathematising to myself those crusty, secret, cautious natures, that are always satisfied when they cry "Stop!" without taking the trouble to say wherefore. What may be a precipice to one man, thought I, is only a step to another! How does *he* know that *his* notions of roguery would tally with *mine*. There's many a thing they call a cheat in England, we might think a practical joke in Ireland. The national prejudices are constantly in opposition—look, for instance, at the opposite view they take of the "Income-tax!" Morris, besides, is a strait-laced fellow, that would be shocked at a trifle. Maybe it's some tom-foolery about his ancestors, some flaw in the 'scutcheon of Conrad, or Leopold, that lived in the year nine. Egad! I wonder what the Dodds were doing in that century? Or perhaps it is his politics he's hinting at, for I believe the Baron is a bit of a Radical! For that matter, so am I—at least, occasionally, and when the Whigs are in power; for, as I observed to you once, Tom, "always be a shade more liberal than the Government." It was years and years before I came to see the good policy of that simple rule, but, believe me, it's well worth remembering. Be a Whig to the Tories; be a Radical to the Whigs; and when Cobden and that batch come in, as they are sure to do sooner or later, there will be yet some lower depth to descend to and cry, "Take me out!"

I was remarking that Morris is quite capable of being shocked at the Baron's politics, and fancying that I am giving my daughter to one of those Organisation of Labour and Rights of Man humbugs, that are always getting up rows and running away from them. Now, Tom, I hold these fellows mighty cheap. A patriot without pluck is like a steam-engine wanting a boiler. Why, it's the very essence and vitality of the whole; but still I am not sure that, as the world goes, I'd be right in refusing him my daughter because he put his faith in Kossuth, and thought the Austrian Empire an unclean thing!

I tell you all these ruminations and reasonings of mine, that you may perceive how I turned the matter over with myself in a candid spirit, and was led away neither by prejudice nor passion. From ten o'clock till eleven—from eleven till midnight—I walked the terrace up and down, like the *Ghost* in "Hamlet"—I hope I'm right in my quotation—but neither sight nor sound indicated Morris's arrival! "What, if he should not come!" thought I. "How can I frame a pretext for putting off the wedding?" There was no opening for delay that I could think of. I had signed no end of deeds and

parchments—I had written my name to "acts" of every possible shape and description. The solemnity of the Church and my paternal blessing were alone wanting to complete the fifth act of the drama. I racked my brain to invent a plausible, or even an intelligible, cause for postponement. Had I been a condemned felon, I could not have tortured my imagination more intensely to find a pretext for a reprieve. But one issue of escape presented itself. I could be dangerously ill—a sudden attack—at my age a man can always have gout in the stomach! My daughter, of course, could not be married if I was at death's door; and as, happily, there was no doctor in the neighbourhood, the feint attack ran no risk of being converted into a serious action. Since the memorable experiment of my mock illness at Ems, I own I had no fancy for the performance, nor could I divest my mind of the belief that all these things are, in a measure, a tempting of Providence. But what else could I do? There was not, so far as I could see, another road open to me.

"I was just, therefore, turning back into the house, to take to my bed in a dangerous condition, when I heard the clattering of whips, in that crack-crack fashion your German postilion always announces an arrival. I at once hastened down to the door, and arrived at the same moment that four posters, hot and smoking, drew up a travelling barouche to the spot. Morris sprang out at once, and seizing my hand, with what, for him, expressed great warmth, said:

"Not too late, I hope and trust?"

"No," said I; "thanks to your note, I was fully warned."

By this time a stranger had also descended from the carriage, and stood beside us.

"First of all, let me introduce my friend, Count Adelberg, who, I rejoice to say, speaks English as well as ourselves."

We bowed, and shook hands.

"By the greatest good luck in the world," continued Morris, "the Count happened to be with me when your letter arrived, and, seeing the post-mark, observed, 'I see you have got a correspondent in my part of the world—who can he be?' Anxious to obtain information from him, I immediately mentioned the circumstance to which your note referred, when he stopped me suddenly, exclaiming, 'Is this possible!—can you really assure me that this is so?'"

But, my dear Purcell, I cannot go over a scene which nearly overcame me at the time, and now, in recollection, is scarcely endurable. The torture and humiliation of that moment I hope never to go through again. In three words, let me tell my tale. Count Adelberg was the owner and lord of Wolfsberg, the Wolfenschäfers being his stewards. This pretended Baron was a young swindling rascal, who had gone to Bonn less for education than

to seek his fortune. The popular notion in Germany, that every English girl is an heiress of immense wealth, had suggested to him the idea of passing himself off for a noble of ancient family and possessions, and thus securing the hand of some rich girl ambitious of a foreign rank and title. He had considerable difficulties to encounter in the prosecution of his scheme, but he surmounted or evaded them all. He absented himself from Baden, for instance, where recognition would have been inevitable, under the pretext of his political opinions; and he, with equal tact, avoided the exposure of his father's vulgarity, by keeping the worthy individual confined to bed. Of the servants and retainers of the castle, the shrewd ones were his accomplices, the less intelligent his dupes. In a word, Tom, an artful plot was well laid and carried out, to impose upon people whose own short-sightedness and vulgar pretensions made them ready victims for even a less ingenious artifice.

I was very nigh crazy as I heard this explanation. They had to hold me twice or thrice by main force to prevent my rushing into the house and wreaking a personal vengeance on the scoundrel. Morris reasoned and argued with me for above an hour. The Count, too, showed that our whole aim should be to prevent the affair getting rumoured abroad, and to suppress all notoriety of the transaction. He alluded with consummate delicacy to our want of knowledge of Germany and its people as an explanation of our blunder, and condoled with me on the outrage to our feelings with all the tact of a well-bred gentleman. Any slight pricks of conscience I had felt before, from our own share in the deception, were totally merged in my sense of insulted honour, and I utterly forgot everything about the imaginary townlands and villages I had so generously laid apart for Mary Anne's dowry.

The next question was, what to do? The Count, with great politeness and hospitality, entreated that we should remain, at least for some days, at the castle. He insisted that no other course could so effectually suppress any gossip the affair might give rise to. He supported this view, besides, by many arguments, equally ingenious as polite. But Morris agreed perfectly with me, that the best thing was to get away at once; that, in fact, it would be utterly impossible for us to pass another day under that roof.

The next step was to break the matter to Mrs. D. I suppose, Tom, that, even to as old a friend as yourself, I ought not to make the confession; but I can't help it—it will out, in spite of me; and I frankly admit it would have amply compensated to me for all the insult, outrage, and humiliation I experienced, if I were permitted just to lay a plain statement of the case before Mrs. D., and compliment her upon the talents she exercises for the advancement of her children, and the proud successes they have achieved. In my heart and soul I believe that, in the disposition I then felt myself, and with as good a cause to handle, I could very nearly have driven her stark mad

with rage, shame, and disappointment. Morris, however, declared positively against this. He took upon himself the whole duty of the explanation, and even made me give a solemn pledge not in any way to interfere in the matter. He went further, and compelled me to forego my plans of vengeance against the young rascal who had so grossly outraged us.

I have not patience to repeat the arguments he employed. They, however, just came to this: that the paramount question was, to hush up the whole affair, and escape at once from the scene in which it occurred. I don't think I'll ever forgive myself for my compliance on this head! I have an accommodating conscience with respect to many debts; but to know and feel that I owe a fellow a horse-whipping, and to experience in my heart the conviction that I don't intend to pay it, lowers me in my own esteem to a degree I have no power to express. I explained this to Morris. I showed him that in yielding to his views I was storing up a secret source of misery for many a solitary reflection. I even proposed to be satisfied with ten minutes' thrashing of him in secret; none to be the wiser but our two selves! He would not hear of it. And now, Tom, I own to you that if the story gets abroad in the world, this is the part of it that will most acutely afflict me. I really can't tell you why I permitted him to over-persuade me, and make me do an act at once contrary to my country, my nature, and my instincts. The only explanation I can give is this: it is the air of the Continent. Bring an English bull-dog abroad, feed him with raw beef as you would at home, treat him exactly the same—but he loses his courage, and wouldn't face a terrier. I'm convinced it's the same with a man; and you'll see fellows put up with slights and offences here that in their own land they'd travel a hundred miles to resent. One comfort I have, however, and it is this—I have never been well since I yielded this point. My appetite is gone; I can't sleep without starting up, and I have a fluttering about my heart that distresses me greatly; and although these are all more or less disagreeable, they show me that, under fair circumstances, K. I. could be himself again; and that though the Continent has breached, it has not utterly destroyed his naturally good constitution.

To be brief, our plan of procedure was this: I was to remain with the Count in his apartment, while Morris went on his mission to Mrs. D. The explanation being made, we were to take the Count's carriage to Constance, where we could remain for a week or so, until we had decided which way to turn our steps, and gave also time to Caroline, who was still with Morris's mother, to join us.

I told M. that I didn't like to go far, that my remittances might possibly miss me, and so on; and the poor fellow at once said, that if a couple of hundred pounds could be of the slightest convenience to me, they were heartily at my service. Of course, Tom, I said no, that I was not in the least

in want of money. It was the first time in my life I refused a loan; but I couldn't take it. I could have found it easier to rob a church at that moment! He flushed deeply when I declined the offer, and stammered out something about his deep regret if he could have offended me; and, indeed, I had some trouble to prove that I wasn't a bit annoyed or provoked.

Although all the conversation I have alluded to took place outside the castle, we were not well inside the door when we perceived that Count Adelberg's arrival had already been made known to the household. Troops of servants hastened to receive him, amongst whom, however, neither the steward nor his son were to be found.

"Send Wolfenschäfer to the library," said he to a footman, as we went along, and then conducted me to a small and favourite chamber of which he always kept the key himself. He made me promise not to quit this till he returned, and then left me to my own, not over-gratifying, reflections in perfect solitude as they were; Morris having departed on his embassy.

I was speculating on the various emotions each of us was likely to experience at the discovery of this catastrophe, when Morris entered the room, with an amount of agitation in his manner I had never witnessed before.

"Well," said I, "you've told her—how does she bear it?"

"I confess," said he, stammeringly, "Mrs. Dodd does not appear to place too much reliance upon my mere word—I mean, not that kind of confidence which could be called implicit."

"Why, you showed her that we have been infamously deceived, grossl insulted?"

"I endeavoured to do so," said he, still hesitating. "I tried in the most delicate manner to explain by what vile artifices you had been tricked; and that, on my detection of the scheme, I had hastened over from Baden, fortunately in sufficient time to prevent the accomplishment of this nefarious plot. She scarcely would hear me out, however; for, without paying any regard to the proofs I was giving of my statement, she flew into a passion about my habit of obtruding myself into family affairs, and the impertinent interference which I had practised more than once in matters which did not concern me. In a word, she utterly disbelieved every word I said, attributed my interested feelings to very unworthy motives, and made a few personal remarks of a nature the reverse of complimentary."

"Was my daughter present?" asked I.

"Miss Dodd had gone to her room a short time previously, but Mrs. Dodd sent for her as I was leaving the chamber."

I could not any longer master my impatience, but, without waiting for more, rushed up-stairs and into my wife's room. A glance assured me that the work of persuasion was already accomplished; for she was lying half

fainting in a large chair, while Mary Anne and Betty were bathing her temples and using the usual restoratives for suspended animation.

I had abundant time to observe Mary Anne during these proceedings, and, to my excessive wonderment do I own it, the girl was as calm, as self-possessed, and as collected as ever I saw her. I defy the very shrewdest to say that they could detect one trait of anxiety or discomposure about her; so that, though I saw Mrs. D. had yielded to the convictions of truth, I really could not say whether or not Mary Anne had yet heard of the story. I thought, however, I'd explore the way by an artificial path, and said: "If she's well enough to be carried down stairs, Mary Anne, we ought to do it. The great matter is to quit this place at once."

"Of course, Papa," said she, without the slightest touch of emotion.

"After what has occurred," said I, "every moment I remain is a fresh insult."

"Quite so," said she, composedly.

Ah, Tom, these women are out and out beyond us! Neither physiologists nor novel-writers know a bit about them. The stock themes with these fellows are their tender susceptibility, gentleness, and so forth. Take my word for it, it is in strength of character, in downright power of endurance, that they excel us. They possess a quality of submission that rises to actual heroism, and they can summon an amount of energy to resist an insult to their pride of which we men have no conception whatever.

Instead of any attempt to condole with Mary Anne, or to comfort her, the best I could do was, to try to imitate the dignified calm of her composure.

"Don't you think," said I to her, "that we could be off by daybreak?"

"Easily," said she. "Augustine is packing up, and when Mamma is a little better I'll assist her."

"*She* knows it all?" said I, with a gesture towards my wife.

"Everything!"

"And believes it at last?"

A nod was the reply.

Egad, Tom, this coolness completely took me aback. I could do nothing but stare at the girl with amazement, and ask myself, "Does she really know what has happened?" In utter indifference to my scrutiny, she continued her attentions to her mother, whispering orders from time to time to Betty Cobb.

"Hadn't you better give some directions about your trunks, Papa?" said she to me.

And thus recalled to myself, I hastened to follow the advice. Paddy, as is customary with him at any great emergency, was drunk, and, with the usual consequence, engaged in active conflict with the rest of the servants' hall. As for James, I sought for him everywhere in vain, but at last learned that he

was seen to saddle and bridle a horse for himself about half an hour before; which done, he mounted and rode off at speed towards the forest, which direction, it appeared, the young Baron! had taken some time before. I should have felt uncommonly uneasy for the result had they not assured me that there was not the very slightest chance of his overtaking the fugitive.

Morris told me, too, that the old steward had been turned out of doors already, so that we had at least the satisfaction of a very heavy vengeance. The Count never ceased to show us every attention in his power; and, so far as politeness and good manners could atone to us, everything was done that could be imagined. With Morris's aid I got my things together, and before daybreak the carriage stood fully loaded at the door. There was, it is true, "an awful sacrifice" exacted by this hurried packing; and the frail finery of the trousseau found but scanty tenderness, as it was bundled up into valises and even carpet-bags! However, I was determined to march, even at the loss of all my baggage, if necessary!

While these active operations went forward, Mrs. D. "improved the occasion" by some sharp attacks of hysterics, which providentially ended in a loss of voice at last; and thus a happy calm was permitted us, in which to take a slight breakfast before starting.

If I call it slight, Tom, it was not with reference to the preparations, which were really on the most sumptuous scale, and all laid out in the large dinner-room with great taste. The Count had told Morris that if his presence might not be thought intrusive, he would feel it a great honour to be permitted to pay his respects to the ladies; and when I mentioned this to Mary Anne, to my no small astonishment she replied, "Oh, with pleasure! I really think we owe it to him for all his attentions." Ay! Tom, and what is more, down came my wife, who had passed the night in screaming and sobbing, looking all smiles and blandnesses, leaning on Mary Anne, who, by the way, had dressed herself in the most becoming fashion, and seemed quite bent on a conquest. Oh, these women, these women!- read them if you can, Tom Purcell! for, upon my conscience, they are far above the humble intelligence of your friend K. I.

I don't think you'd believe me if I was to give you an account of that same breakfast. If ever there was an incident calculated to overwhelm with shame and confusion, it was precisely that which had just occurred to us. It was not possible to conceive a situation more painful than we were placed in; and with all that, I vow and declare that, except Morris and myself, none seemed to feel it. Mrs. D. eat and drank, and bowed, and smiled, and gesticulated, and ogled the Count to her heart's content; and Mary Anne chatted and laughed with him in all the ease of intimate acquaintanceship; and as he evidently was struck by her beauty, she appeared to accept the homage of his admiration as a very satisfactory compliment. As for me, I tried to

behave with the same good breeding as the others, but it was no use!—every mouthful I eat almost choked me; every time I attempted to be jocose, I broke down, with a lamentable failure. Rage, shame, and indignation were all at work within me; and even the ease and indifference displayed by the womenkind, increased my sense of humiliation. It might very probably have been far less well-mannered and genteel; but I tell you frankly, I'd have been better pleased with them both if they had cried heartily, and made no secret of their suffering. I half suspect Morris was of the same mind, too; for he could not keep his eyes off them, and evidently in profound astonishment. But for him, indeed, I don't know how I should have got through that morning, for Mrs. D. and her daughter were far too intent upon fresh conquests to waste a thought on recent defeats, and it was evident that Count Adelberg was received by them both with all the credit due to the "real article." This threw me completely on Morris for all counsel and guidance; and I must say he behaved admirably, making all the arrangements for our departure with a ready promptitude that showed old habits of discipline.

In the Count's calèche there was no room for servants; but our own was to follow with them and the baggage, and also bring up James. All of which details M. was to look after, as well as the care of forwarding to me any letters that might arrive after I was gone.

It was nigh eight o'clock before we started, though breakfast was over a little after six; and, indeed, when all was ready, horses harnessed, and postilions in the saddle, the Count insisted on the "ladies" ascending the great watch-tower of the castle to see the sun rise. He assured them people came from all parts of the world for that view, which was considered one of the finest in Europe; and in proof of his assertion pointed to a long string of inscriptions on marble tablets in the wall. Here, it was the Kur Furst of this; and there, the Landgravine of that. Dukes, Archdukes, and Field-Marshals figured in the catalogue, and amidst the illustrious of foreign lands a distinguished place was occupied by Milor Stubbs, who made the ascent on a day in the year recorded. That Mrs. Dodd and Mary Anne are destined to a like immortality I have no doubt whatever.

At last we got into the carriage, but not until the Count had saluted me on both cheeks, and embraced me tenderly in stage fashion; he kissed Mrs. D.'s hand, and Mary Anne's also, with such a touching devotion, that, for the first time during that memorable morning, they both wiped their eyes. The sight of Morris, however, seemed to recal them to the sober realities of life; they shook hands with him, and away we went at that tearing gallop which, though very little more than six miles an hour, has all the apparent speed and the real peril of a special train.

"Where's my fur cloak? Is my muff put in? I don't see the grey

shawl. Mary Anne, what has become of the rug? I'm certain half our things are left behind. How could it be otherwise, seeing the absurd haste in which we came away!" These are a few specimens of Mrs. D.'s lucubrations, given "per saltim" as we bumped through the deep ruts of the road, and will explain, as well as a chapter on the subject, the train in which her thoughts were proceeding.

Ay, Tom! for all the disgrace and ignominy of that miserable night and morning, she had no other sentiment of sorrow than for the absurd haste in which we came away. I had firmly determined not to recur to this unpleasant affair, and to let it sleep amongst the archives of similar disagreeable reminiscences, but this provocation was really too strong for me! Were they women?—were they human beings, and could reason this way?—were the questions that struggled for an answer within me! I tried to repress the temptation, but I could not, and so I resolved, if I could do no more, at least to discipline my emotions, and hold them within certain limits. I waited till we were out of the grounds—I delayed till we were some miles on the high road—and then, with a voice subdued to a mere whisper, and in a manner that vouched for the most complete subjection, said:

"Mrs. Dodd, may I be permitted to inquire—and I premise that the object of my question is neither any personal nor a mere vulgar curiosity, but simply to investigate what might be termed a physiological fact, namely, whether females really feel less than the males of the human species?"

My dear Tom, the calm tone of my exordium availed me nothing. To no end was it that I propounded the purely scientific basis of my investigation. She flew at me at once like a tigress. The abstract question that I had submitted for discussion she flung indignantly to the winds, and boldly asked me if I thought "to escape that way." "Escape"—that way! I was thunderstruck, stupified, dumb-foundered! Did the woman want to infer—could she by any diabolical ingenuity or perverseness imply—that I was possibly to blame for our late calamity? You'll not credit it; nobody could, but it is the truth, notwithstanding. *That* was exactly the charge she now preferred against me. If *I* had taken proper steps to investigate the "Baron's" real pretensions—if *I* had made due and fitting inquiries about him—if *I* had been commonly intelligent, and displayed the most ordinary knowledge of the world—in fact, if, instead of being a bull-headed, blundering old Irish Country Gentleman, I had been a cross between a Foreign Prefect and a London Detective, the chances were that we had been spared the mortification of exhibiting ourselves as endeavouring to dupe people who were already successfully engaged in duping us! This wasn't all, Tom, but she boldly propounded the startling declaration, that she and Mary Anne both had suspected the Baron to be an imposition and a cheat! and although his low manners and vulgar tone imposed upon *me*, they had always regarded him as

shockingly underbred! It was *I*, however, who had rushed into the whole misadventure—it was *I* concocted the entire scheme—*I* planned the visit—*I* made up the match. My stupid cupidity, my blundering anxiety for a grand alliance, were the causes of all the evil! The mock munificence of my settlements was hurled at me as proof positive of the eagerness of my duplicity, and I was overwhelmed with a mass of accusations which I verily believe would have obtained a verdict against me at the hands of any honest and impartial jury of my countrymen.

I have more than once had to acknowledge, that when perfectly assured in my own conscience of my innocence, Mrs. D. has contrived to shake my doubts about myself, and at last succeeded in making me believe that I might have been culpable without knowing it. I suppose in these cases I may have been morally innocent and legally guilty, but I'll not puzzle my head by any subtlety of explanation; enough if I own that a less enviable predicament no man need covet!

I sat under this new allegation sad, silent, and abashed; and although Mary Anne said but little, yet her occasional "You must admit, Papa," "You will surely acknowledge," or "You cannot possibly forget," chimed in, and swelled the full chorus of accusation against me. If I said nothing, I thought the more. My reflections took this shape: Here is another blessed fruit of our coming abroad. Such an incident never could have befallen us at home. Why then should we continue to live on exposed to similar casualties? why reside in a land where we cannot distinguish the man of rank from his scullion, and where all the forms that constitute good breeding, and, maybe, good grammar, are quite beyond our appreciation? Every dilettante scribbler for the magazines who sketches his rambles in Spain or Switzerland, grows jocose over some eccentricity or absurdity of his countrymen. Their blunders in language, dress, or demeanour are duly chronicled and relied upon as subjects for a droll chapter; but let me tell you, Tom, that the difficulties of foreign residence are very considerable indeed, and except to the man who issues from England with a certain well-proved and admitted station, social or political, the society into which he may be thrown is a downright lottery. The first error he commits, and it is almost inevitable, is to mistake the common forms of hat-lifting and bowing for acquaintanceship. "Bull" thinks that the gentleman desires to know him, and obligingly condescends to accept his overtures. The foreigner, somewhat amused to see the very common-place of politeness received as evidence of acquaintance, profits by the admission, chats, and comes to tea. Now, Tom, whether it be cheap soup, cheap clothing, cheap travelling, or cheap friendship, I have a strong prejudice against them all. My notion is, that the real article is not be had without some cost and trouble.

These were some of my ruminations as we rattled along; and although the

road was interesting, and the day a fine bracing autumnal one, my mind was not attuned to pleasure or enjoyment. We stopped to bait at Donaueschingen, for we were obliged, by some accident or other, to take the same horses on, and found a most comfortable little inn at the sign of the "Sharpshooter." After dinner we took a stroll in the garden of the palace of the Mediatised Prince of Furstenberg, for of course there is a palace and a Mediatised Prince wherever there is a town of three thousand inhabitants throughout Germany. By the way, Napoleon treated these people pretty much like our own Encumbered Estates Court at home. He sold them out without any ceremony, and got rid of the feudal privileges and the seignorial rights with a bang of the auctioneer's hammer. Of course, as with us, there was often a great deal of individual hardship, but these little principalities were large evils, and half the disturbances of Europe grew out of their corrupt administration.

There is, I often fancy, a natural instinctive kind of corruption incidental to the dominion of a small state. They are too small and too insignificant to attract any attention from the world without, and within their own narrow limits there is no such thing as a public opinion. The ruler, consequently, is free to follow the caprices of his folly, his cruelty, or his wastefulness. He has neither to dread a Parliament nor a newspaper. If he send his small contingent—a "commander-in-chief and a drummer of great experience"—to the great army of the Confederation he belongs to, he may tax his subjects, or hang them, to his heart's content! Now, I cannot imagine a worse state of things than this, nor any more likely to foster that spirit of disconten which every hour is adding to the feeling of the Continent.

While I am following this theme, I am forgetting what was uppermost a few minutes back in my mind. In the garden of the same palace, which belongs to a certain Count Furstenberg, there is a singularly beautiful little spring; it bubbles up amidst flowers and grass, and overruns the greensward in many a limpid streamlet. There is something in the unadorned simplicity of this tiny well, rippling through the yellow daffodils and "starry river buds," wonderfully pleasing; but what an interest fills the mind as we hear that this is the source of the Danube! "The mighty river that sweeps along through the rocky gorges of Upper Austria, washes the foundations of the Imperial Vienna, and flows on, ever swelling, and widening, and deepening, to the Black Sea—that giant stream, so romantic in its associations with the touching tale of our own Richard—so picturesque in its windings, so teeming with interest to the poet, the painter, the merchant, and the politician there it is, a little crystal rivulet, whose destiny might well seem limited to the flowery borders and blossoming beds around it." This isn't mine, Tom, though it's exactly what I would have said if the words occurred to me, but I copy it out of the Visitors' Book, where strangers write their names, and, so to say, leave their cards upon the infant Danube.

Truisms are only tiresome to the hearer; they are a delightful recreation to the man that tells them, so that I am sorely tempted to mention some of those that suggested themselves to my mind as I stood beside that little spring —all the analogies that at once arose to my fancy, between human life and the course of a mighty river, between the turnings, and twinings, and aberrations of childhood, the headlong current of youth, the mature force of man hood, and the trackless issue, at last, into the great ocean of eternity! One lesson we may assuredly gather from the contemplation: not to predicate from small beginnings against the likelihood of a glorious future!

I left the place regretfully; the tranquil quietude of my two hours' ramble through the garden restored me to a serene and peaceful frame of mind. The little village itself, the tidy, unpretending inn, clean, comfortable, and a model of cheapness, were all to my fancy, and I could very well have liked to linger on, there, for a week or so. After all, what a commentary is it upon all pursuits of pleasure and amusement, to think that we really find our greatest happiness in those little, out-of-the-way, isolated spots, remote from all the attractions and blandishments of the gay world! I don't mean to say that Mrs. D. quite concurred with me, for she grew very impatient at my delay, and wondered excessively "what peculiar attraction the garden of the palace might have possessed to make me forget myself." But it's not so easy a thing to do as she thinks! Forgetting oneself, Tom, implies so many other oblivions. It means forgetting one's tenants that have been over-rented —one's banker over-drawn—one's horses over-worked—one's house out of repair—one's estate out at elbows—forgetting the duns that torment, the creditors that torture you—the latitats, the writs, the mortgages, the bonds —all the inflictions, in fact, consequent to parchment, signed, sealed, and delivered over to your persecuting angel! Oh dear, oh dear! what a thirsty swig would I take of Lethe if I could! and how happy would I be to start fresh in life without any one of the "liabilities," as they call them, that attach to Kenny Dodd!

I remember, when I was a schoolboy, no day of the week had such terrors for me as Saturday, because we were obliged to answer a repetition of the whole week's work. That carrying up of the past was a load that always destroyed me! My notion was to let bygones be bygones, and it was downright cruelty to take me over the old ground of my former calamities. The same prejudice has tracked me through life. I can face a new misfortune as well as my neighbours; what kills me is going back over the old ones. Let me tell you, too, that there is a great deal of balderdash talked in the world about experience—that with experience you'll do this, that, and t'other, better. Don't believe a word of it. You might as well tell me that having the typhus will teach a man patience the next time he catches a fever! Take my word for it, begin as fresh as you can against the ills of life—know as little



of them as you can—think as little of them! Keep your constitution—whether it be moral or physical—as intact as you are able, and rely on it you'll not fare the worse when it comes to the trial!

It was a fine evening, with a thin rim of a new moon in the sky, when we got ready to leave Donaueschingen. The bill for dinner came to about five shillings for three of us, wine included, and no charge for rooms, so that when I gave as much more to the servants, the enthusiasm of the household knew no bounds. The housemaid, indeed, in an access of enthusiasm, would kiss my hand, and got rebuked by my wife as a "forward hussy, that ought to be well looked after." From this incident, however, our attention was soon diverted by the arrival of our second carriage, but without James! A note from Morris explained that he did not like to detain the servants, lest it should prove inconvenient to us, and that he would take care James should join us at Constance—probably early on the next day. This note was handed to me by the postboy, a circumstance speedily accounted for, as I got out and saw that the whole company, consisting of Betty, Augustine, the courier, Paddy Byrne, and a fifth, unknown, were all very drunk and unable to speak, closely wedged in the britschka! Of course it was no time to ask for any explanations, and we came on to this place, which we reached by midnight.

As I have given you a somewhat full narrative of what befel us, I may as well, ere I conclude, add some words of explanation of the state of our amiable followers. Betty Cobb, it appears, was seized with connubial symptoms while we were at the castle, and yielding to the soft impeachment, and not being deterred by any discovery of false rank or pretensions, actually bestowed her hand on a distinguished swineherd that pertained to the place. The wedding took place after we left, the convivial festivities being continued all along the road till they overtook us. Had the unlucky girl married a New Zealand chief, or a Kaffir, her choice could not have fallen upon a more thoroughly savage specimen of the human race. The fellow is a Black Forest Caliban of the worst description. The question is now to know what to do with him, for Mrs. D. will not consent to part with Betty, nor will Betty separate from her liege lord; so that amongst my other blessings I may number that of carrying about the world a scoundrel that would disgrace a string of galley-slaves! Just imagine, Tom, in the rumble of a travelling-carriage a fellow six foot and a half high, dressed in a cow-hide, with an ox-goad in his hand, and a long naked knife in his girdle, speaking no intelligible tongue, nor capable of any function save the herding of wild animals—the most uncultivated specimen of brute nature I ever heard, saw, or even read of! Fancy, I say, the pleasure of "lugging" this creature over the continent of Europe, feeding, housing, and clothing him, his sole claim being that he is the husband of that precious bargain, Betty Cobb!

Why, he'd bring shame on a beast caravan! The best of it is, too, he

holds to his "caste" like a Hindoo, and refuses all other occupation save the charge of swine. He would not aid to unload the carriage—would not lift a trunk, nor carry a carpet-bag; and when admonished by Paddy for his laziness, showed two inches of a broad knife up his sleeve with a grin meant to imply that he knew how to resist any assault on his dignity! That the scoundrel has no respect for law is clear enough; so that my hope is, he will commit some terrible infraction, and that we may be able to send him to the galleys for the rest of his days. How I'm to keep him and Paddy apart is more than yet appears to me. I suppose, in the end, one of them will kill the other. From what I see here, the expense of keeping this beast— at an hotel at least—will be equal to the cost of three ordinary servants; for he has no regular meal times, but has food cooked for him "promiscuously," and eats—if I'm to credit the landlord—either a kid or a lamb per diem. A bear wouldn't be half the expense, and a far more companionable beast besides. It is but fair to say that Betty seems to adore him; she crams the monster all day with stolen victuals, and appears to have no other care in life than in watching after him.

What induces Mrs. D. to feel this sudden attachment to Betty herself I can't imagine. Up to this she railed at her unceasingly, and deplored the day and the hour she took her from home. But now, when this alliance really makes her insupportable, she won't hear of parting with her, and submits to a degree of tyranny from this woman that is utterly inexplicable. It's another of those feminine anomalies, Tom, that neither you nor I, nor maybe anybody else, will ever be able to reconcile.

You will probably wonder how, at a moment like this, smarting as I am under the combined effects of insult and disappointment, I can turn my attention to a matter of this trifling nature; but I confess to you that the admission of this uncivilised element into the circle of my family inspires me with feelings of disgust, not unmixed with terror; for what he may do in any access of fury the infernal gods alone can say. So long as we are here, in this remote and little-visited town, the notice he attracts is confined to the troop of street loungers who follow him; but I have yet to learn how we are ever to make our appearance in a regular city in his company.

Now to another matter, Tom, and the most essential of all. What are we to do for money? for, whether we go on or go back, we must have it. I haven't the heart to go over the accounts; nor would it put sixpence more in my pockets, if I was like Babbage's calculating machine! Screw up the tenants, and make them pay the arrears. Healey owes us at least two hundred pounds. Try if he can't pay half. See, besides, if you cannot find a tenant for the place, even for a year. This Exhibition in Dublin will fill the country with strangers · and a good advertisement of Dodsborough, with an

account of the "shooting and fishing, capital society, and two packs of hounds in the neighbourhood," might take the notice of some aspiring Cockney. From what I see in the papers, Ireland is going to be the fashion this summer. I suppose that she is starved down to the pitch to be "thin and genteel," and that's the reason of it.

Tell me what you think of this great display of "industrial products," as they call it. Are we as wonderful as the Irish papers say, or are we really as backward as the *Times* pronounces us? My own notion is, that the whole thing proceeds on a misconception of the country and its capabilities. These Exhibitions are essentially dependent on manufacturing skill for their excellence. Now, we are not a manufacturing people. We are agriculturists, and so are the Yankees; and, consequently, the utmost we can do is to show off the clever inventions and cunning products of our neighbours. Writing, as I do, confidentially to yourself, I will own, too, that I am not one of those sanguine admirers of these raree-shows, nor do I see in them the seeds of all that progress that others prophesy. Looking at a wonderful mechanical invention will no more teach me to imitate it, than going to Batty's Circus will enable me to jump through a hoop, or ride on my head! Amusement, pleasure, interest, there is in one as much as the other; but as for any educational advantage, Tom, I don't believe in it. To the scientific man these things are all familiar—to the peasant they are all miraculous; and though the Electric Telegraph be really a wonderful thing, after one sees the miracles of the Church it ceases to surprise you! At all events, give me some account of the place and the people in your next, and write soon.

I have kept this a day back, hoping to announce James's arrival here, but up to this there is no tidings of him.

Yours, ever faithfully,
KENNY JAMES DODD.

P.S.—I find now that this town is not in Switzerland, but in Baden, for the police have been here to know "who we are?" and "why we have come?"—two questions that would take longer to answer than they suspect. How absurd these little bits of national prejudice sound, when the symbol of nationality is only a blue post or a white one, and no geographical limit announces a new country. Droll enough, too, they are most importunate in their inquiries after James; as if the appearance of his name in the passport requires that he should be forthcoming when asked for. Ah, Tom! if the fellows that knocked old Europe about in '48 had resolutely set their faces against these stumbling-blocks to civilisation—passports, police spies, town dues, and gate imposts—they'd have won the sympathies of millions, who

do not care a rush about Universal Suffrage and the Liberty of the Press—and, what is more, the concessions could never have been revoked nor recalled!

To myself, individually, the system presents few annoyances; for I sit serene behind my ignorance of all continental languages, and say to myself, "Touch me if you dare." Maybe they half suspect the substance of my meditations, for they show the greatest deference towards my condition of passive resistance. The Brigadier has just bowed himself out of the room, with what sounded like a hearty curse, but what Mary Anne assures me was a sincere protestation of his sentiment of "high consideration and esteem." And now to dinner.

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## LETTER VIII.

MARY ANNE DODD TO MISS DOOLAN, OF BALLYDOOLAN.

Constance on the Lake.

DEAREST KITTY,—With what rapture do I once more throw myself into the arms of your affection! How devotedly do I seek the sanctuary of my dearest Kitty's heart! It is all over, my sweet friend—all over! I see you start—your cheek is bloodless, and your lips tremble—but reassure yourself, Kitty, and hear me If there be anything against which I am weak and powerless—if there be aught in life to oppose which I have neither strength nor energy—it is the reproach of one I love! Already do I stand accused before you, even now have you arraigned me, and my condemnation is trembling on your lips. Avow it—own it, dear girl. Your heart, at least, has said the words of my sentence: "All over! so then Mary Anne has jilted him—changed her mind in the last hour—trifled with his affections, and made a sport of his feelings." Yes, such is the charge against me; and, trembling as I stand before you, I syllable the word "Guilty." "Guilty, but with extenuating circumstances." Be calm then, be patient; and, above all, be merciful, while I plead before you.

I deny nothing, I evade nothing. I cannot even pretend that my altered feelings originated in any long process of reason or reflection. I will not affect to say that I struggled against conflicting doubts, and only yielded when powerless to resist them. No, dearest, I am above every such shallow artifice; and I own that it was on the very morning your letter arrived—at the moment when my hot tears were falling over the characters traced by

your hand—as, enraptured, I kissed the lines that breathed your love—then there suddenly broke upon me a light illumining the dark horizon around me. Space became peopled with forms and images, voices and warnings floated around and above me, and as I read your words—"If, then, your whole heart be his"—I trembled, Kitty, my eyes grew dim, my bosom heaved in agony, and, in my heart-wrung misery, I cried aloud, "Oh save me from this perfidy—save me from myself!"

Save that the letter which my fingers grasped convulsively was the offspring of friendship and not of love betrayed, the scene was precisely like that which closes the second act of the "Lucia di Lammermoor." Mamma, the Baron, James, even to the Priest, all were there; and, like *Lucia*, dressed in my bridal robe, the orange-flowers in my hair, and such a love of a Brussels veil fastened mantilla-wise to the back of the head, I stood pale, trembling, and conscience-stricken! the awful words of your question ringing in my ears, like the voice of an angel come to call me to judgment, "'If your whole heart be his!' but it is not," cried I, aloud—"it is not—it never can be!" I know not in what wild rhapsody my emotions found utterance. I have no memory of that gushing cataract in which overwrought feelings found their channel. I spoke in that rapt enthusiasm in which, as we are told, the ancient priestesses delivered their dream-revealings, for I, too, was as one inspired, as agony alone can inspire. Of myself I know nothing, but I have since heard that the scene was harrowing to a degree that no words can convey. The Baron, mounted on his fastest courser, fled into the woods; James, spirited on by some imagined sense of injury, thirsting for a vengeance on he knew not what or whom, pursued him; Mamma was seized with frantic screaming; and even Papa himself, whose lethargic humour stands him like an armour of proof—even he swore and imprecated in a manner that called forth a most impressive rebuke from the chaplain.

The scene changes—we are away! The castle and its deep woods grow dim behind us; the wild mountains of the Schwartz Wald rise before and around us. The dark pines wave their stately tops, the wood-pigeon cries his plaintive note; rocky glen and rugged precipice, foaming waterfalls and wooded slopes, pass swiftly by, and on we hasten—on and on; but, with all our speed, dark, brooding care can still outstrip us, and sorrow follows faster than the wind.

We arrived at Constance by midnight, when I soon betook me to bed, and cried myself to sleep. Sweet—sweet tears were they, flowing like the crystal drops from the margin of an overcharged fountain; for such was the heart of your afflicted Mary Anne.

It is not by any casuistry about the injustice I should have done, had I bestowed a moiety where I had promised a whole heart. It is not by any pretence that I felt this to be an unworthy artifice, that I now appeal to your

merciful consideration. It is simply as one suddenly awakened to the terrible conviction that she cannot be loved as she is capable of loving; or, in other words, that she despairs of ever inspiring that passion which alone could requite her for the agony of love. Oh, Kitty, it is an agony, and such a one as no torture of human wickedness ever equalled. May you never feel it in that intensity of suffering which is alike its ecstasy and its woe.

Do not reproach me, Kitty: my heart has already done so, bitterly—terribly! Again and again have I asked myself, "Who, and what are you, that dare to reject rank, wealth, station, glorious lineage, and a noble name? If these and the most devoted love cannot move you, what are the ambitions that rise before you?" Over and over do I interrogate myself thus, and yet the only reply is, a heart-heaved sigh—the spirit-wrung voice of inward suffering! You, dearest, who know your friend, will not accuse her of exaggerated or overwrought vanity. None so well as you are aware that those are not my characteristic failings.

An excess of humility may depreciate me, even to the lowliest condition of humble fortune; and if happiness be but there, I will not deem the choice a mean one! You will judge of the sincerity of my words, when I tell you that I have just been unpacking all my things, and putting them away in drawers and wardrobes; and oh, Kitty, if you could but see them! Papa was really splendid, and allowed me to order everything I could fancy. Of course his generosity fettered rather than stimulated my extravagance, so that I merely took the absolute *nécessaire*. Of these I may mention two cashmeres and three Brussels scarfs, one a perfect love; twelve morning, eighteen evening dresses, of which one for the altar is covered with Valenciennes, looped up with pearls and brilliants; the corsage ornamented down the front with a bouquet of the same stones, arranged to represent lilies of the valley, with dewdrops—a pretty device, and quite simple, to suit the occasion. The presentation robe is actually magnificent, and only needs a diamond *parure* to be queenly. How I dote, too, on these dear little bonnets. I never weary of trying them on: they sit so coquettishly on the back of the head, and make one look sly and modest, and gentle and saucy, all at once! In this walk of art the French are incomparably above us. Dress with them observes all the harmony of colour and the keeping of a great picture. No lilac bonnets and blue shawls—no scarlets and pinks alternately killing and marring each other—none of that false heraldry of costume by which your Englishwoman displays her vulgar wealth and ill-assorted finery. All is graceful, well toned, and harmonious. Your *mise* is, so to say, the declaration of your sentiments, just as the signal of a man-of-war proclaims her intention; and how ingenious to think that your stately cashmere suggests homage, your ermined mantle, watchful devotion, your muslin peignoir, confidence and intimate intercourse.

Now, your "English" must *look* all these to be intelligible, and constantly converts herself into a great staring, ogling, leering machine, very shocking to contemplate.

I need scarcely remark to you, dearest, that the step I have just taken has made my position in the family like that of the young lady who refused Louis Napoleon before Europe. Our situations, if you come to consider them, are wonderfully alike; and there are extraordinary points of resemblance between the gentlemen, to which I cannot at present more fully allude. The ungenerous observations and slighting allusions to which I am exposed would actually wring your heart. Even James remarked that the whole affair reminded him of Joe Hudson, who, after accepting an Indian appointment, refused to sail when he had obtained the outfit. "Mary Anne only wanted the kit," was the vulgar impertinence by which he closed this piece of flattery, and this was in allusion to the *trousseau!* Men are so shallow, so meanly minded, Kitty, and above all, so ungenerous in the measure of our motives. They really think that we value dress for itself, and not as a means to an end—that end being their own subjection! Mamma, I must say, is truly kind—she regrets—naturally enough you will think, the loss of a great alliance. She had pictured to herself the quartering of the M'Carthys with the house of W——, and ranged in imagination over various remote, but ambitious contingencies; but, with true maternal affection, she has effaced all these memories from her heart, only to think of me and of my emotions. I have also been able to supply her with a consolation, no less great than unexpected, in this wise: Papa, from one cause or other, had been of late seriously meditating a return to Ireland; I shame to say, Kitty, that he never valued, never understood the Continent; its habits, its ways, and its wines, all disagreed with him; financial reasons, too, influenced him; for somehow, up to this, we have been forced to overlook the claims of economy, and only regard those which refer to the station we are to maintain in society. Now, from all these causes, he had brought himself to think the only safety lay in a speedy retreat! Mamma had ascertained this beyond a doubt by some passages in Mr. Purcell's letters to Papa; how obtained I know not. From these she gathered that at any moment he was capable of abandoning the campaign, and embarking the whole army! The misery such a course would entail upon us I have no need to enlarge upon; nor could I, if I tried, find words to depict the condition of suffering that would be ours if again domesticated in that dreadful island. Forgive me, dearest, if I wound one susceptibility of your tender heart. I would not ruffle even a rose-leaf of your gentle nature; but I cannot refrain from saying that Ireland is very dreadful! Philosophers affect to tell us, Kitty, that from the chemical properties of meteoric stones we can predicate the nature of the planets from which they have fallen; and the most ingenious theories as to the structure, size, and

conformation of their bodies are built upon such slender materials. Now, would it be too wide a stretch of ingenuity to apply this theory to home affairs, and argue, from the specimen one sees of the dear country, what must be the land that has reared them? And oh, Kitty, if so, what a sentence we should be condemned to pass!

But to the consolation of which I spoke, and which in this diversion I was nigh forgetting. Papa, as I mentioned, was bent on going home; and now these costly preparations of wedding finery offer the means of opposing him, for of what use could they possibly be at Dodsborough, Kitty? To what end that enormous outlay, if brought back to the regions of Bruff? Here is an expensive armament—all the *matériel* of a campaign provided; who would counsel the consigning it to rust and decay? who would advise giving over to moths what might be made the adornment of some brilliant capital? Whether we consider the question morally, financially, or strategically, we arrive at the same conclusion. Such a display as this, if exhibited at home, would revolutionise the whole neighbourhood, disgust them with home-grown gowns and bonnets, and lead to irrepressible extravagance, debt, and ruin. So far for moral considerations. Financially, the cost is incurred, and it only remains to make the outlay profitable; this, it is needless to say, cannot be done at Dodsborough. And now for the strategy, the tactical part, Kitty. We all know, that whenever a marriage is broken off, scandal seizes the occasion for any reports she likes to circulate, and the good-natured world always agrees in condemning "the Lady." If her character or conduct be unimpeachable, then they make searches as to her temper. She was a termagant, that ruled her whole family, scolded her sisters, bullied her brothers, and was the terror of every one. If this indictment cannot be sustained, they find a flaw in her fortune; her twenty thousand was "only ten;" ten, Irish currency; perhaps on an Irish mortgage of an Irish property, mayhap charged with Heaven knows what of annuities to Irish relations! Now, Kitty, it is essential to avoid every one of these evil imputations, and I have supplied Mamma with so good a brief in the cause, so carefully drawn up, and so well argued, that I don't think Papa will let the case go to a jury, or, in other words, that he will give in his submission at once. I have much more to tell you, and will write again to-morrow.

Ever yours in affection,

MARY ANNE DODD.

## LETTER IX.

MARY ANNE DODD TO MISS DOOLAN, OF BALLYDOOLAN.

Lake of Constance.

My dearest Kitty,—True to my pledge, I sit down to continue the revelations, the first volume of which is already before you; and, as I left off in a chapter of "désagréables," let me finish the theme ere I proceed to pleasanter paths and greener pastures.

Betty Cobb has gone and taken to herself a husband; and such a husband as really I did not fancy could be found nearer us than the Waterkloof, if that be the correct spelling of the pleasant locality in Kaffirland, where some of the something—Fifth or Eighth—are always getting surprised and cut to pieces. The creature is a swineherd—one of those dreadful semi-savages that Germany rears out of respect to its ancient traditions about wood demons and kobolds. So terrific an object I never beheld, and his "get up," as James would call it, equals his natural advantages.

You may remember the wretches who are thrusting the page into the furnace in Retsch's illustrations of Schiller's poem, "Der Gang auf den Eisenhammer"—one of these is a flattering likeness of him. Betty, however, whose taste in manly beauty is not formed on the Antinous model, believes him to be perfection. At all events, no promise of double wages, presents, or other seductions, could warp her allegiance from this seductive object; and as Mamma suddenly discovered that she was quite indispensable to her, the consequence is, that we have to accept the company and companionship of the graceful "Taddy," who is now part of our legation as a swineherd unattached. You must know, Kitty, that these worthy people, who are brought up from infancy to regard pigs as the most important part of the creation, are impressed with a profound contempt for the human species—that all their habits are imbued with swinish tastes, modes, and prejudices—that they love to live in woods, sleep on the ground, and grunt their sentiments, when they have any. Whether these be the characteristics of conjugalism, or the features which, as the book says, "make home happy," time and Betty alone can tell. I must say that fear and disgust are, for the present, the impressions his appearance suggests to me, but Betty is clearly of a different mind.

Meanwhile, as regards ourselves, he is really a most embarrassing element of the state. He is totally unacquainted with all laws, divine and human,

and only sufficiently gifted with speech to convey his commonest wishes; and, from what I can learn, Caspar Hauser was a man of the world in comparison to him. Papa is, of course, frantic at the thought of his pertaining to us—but what is to be done? Betty has declared that she will follow him to Jericho; by which she means to some fabulous land of unreal geography; and Mamma will not part with Betty. To-morrow, or next day, I expect to hear that Taddy protests he can't live without his pigs, and that a legion of swine become part of our travelling equipment. Already has his presence on our staff called for the attention of the authorities, who are, very naturally, curious to know what we mean by such a functionary. Papa, on his side, thinks it part of an Englishman's birthright to resist, oppose, and torment the police; and, of course, will give no information whatever as to who he is here, but avows his determination to retain him in his service just on that account.

These complications—to give them a mild name—have so absorbed me that I have forgotten to tell you about our present place of sojourn. The Lake of Constance sounds pretty, dearest. It seems to address itself at once to our sense of the beautiful, and our moral attachment to the true. As we approached it, I looked eagerly from the carriage, at each turning of the mountain road, for some glimpses of the scenery; but night fell suddenly, and closed all in darkness. Early on the following morning, I rose, and taking Augustine with my sketch-book, hurried down to the borders of the lake; for our most quaint and ancient "hostelry" stands in the very centre of the town, and fully fifteen minutes' walk from the water. We reached it suddenly, on turning the angle of a narrow lane, and came out upon a small stone pier projecting into the water, and this was the lake—the Lake of Constance! Only think, Kitty, of a great wide expanse of bleak water, with low shores; no glaciers, no alps, no sublimity! I could have cried with disappointment. The custom-house people—very nice-looking men, with a becoming uniform of green and gold—assured me that at the upper end of the lake I should see the mountains of the Vorarlberg, and also the range of the Swiss Alps, and have abundant material for my pencil. Meanwhile, they made an old boatman sit while I sketched him; he was mending his net, and with his long blue nightcap, and scarf of the same colour, his snow-white beard, and fine Rembrandt colour, he really made a charming study. The chief officer of the customs—a remarkably handsome man, with the very blackest moustaches—was in downright enthusiasm at the success of my little sketch; and really, as it was utterly valueless, I could not resist Augustine's entreaty to tear it out of my book and give it to him.

You can't think, Kitty, with what a graceful mixture of gratitude and dignity he accepted my worthless present. He might, so far as breeding went, have been a captain of hussars. He accompanied us all the way back



to the hotel, having previously placed his boat and his boat's crew at my disposal during our stay here. Ah, Kitty, what a charm there is in the amiable tone of foreigners! How striking the contrast between their cultivated politeness and the rude barbarism of our own people! Fancy for a moment what is our home notion of a custom-house official!—a shabby-genteel individual with a week's beard and a brandy-and-water eye, that pokes into your trunk after French gloves, and searches your brother's pocket for cheroots. Imagine *him* beside one of these magnificently dressed and really splendid-looking men, with all the air of an aide-de-camp to the Queen! How naturally we are led to estimate the style in which people live by the dress and appointment of their household, and should we not pass a similar judgment on states, and argue, from the appropriate costume of the functionaries, to their own completeness and perfection of system?

I said nothing to Mamma of our newly made acquaintance, for as I entered the inn I learned that James and another gentleman had just arrived, but so tired and fatigued, that they both had given orders that they should not be disturbed on any account. You may be sure, Kitty, I was intensely curious to know who the stranger was, but all my inquiries were only so many additional provocatives to my eagerness, without any satisfaction! I learned, indeed, that he was young, handsome, tall, and spoke French and German fluently, so much so, indeed, that the waiter hesitated whether to call him English or not! James and his fellow traveller had arrived by the diligence from Schaffhausen, so that there was really nothing by which we could catch a clue to his friend, and I was left to my patience and my conjectures till breakfast-time.

I own to you, Kitty, the trial was too much for my nerves, overstrung as they have been by late events. I fancied a thousand things. I imagined incidents, events, casualties, of which, even to you, dearest, I cannot give the interpretation. Unable, at last, to resist the working of a curiosity that had risen to a torture, I took the resolution to awake James, and ask who was his friend. I traversed the corridor with stealthy footsteps, and sought out the number of his room. It was 43, the waiter said, and the last on the gallery, and so I found it. I turned the handle noiselessly, and entered. The window curtains were closely drawn, and all was in deep shadow. In one corner of the chamber stood the bed, from which the deep respirations of the sleeper issued, and, poor fellow, it must have been more than common fatigue and weariness that could have caused such sounds. As with cat-like stillness I stole across the chamber, my eyes, growing accustomed to the dim half-light, began to discover objects on each side of me. For instance, I perceived a splendid dressing-gown of amber-coloured silk, lined with pale blue, and gorgeously embroidered, a cap of the same colours, with a silver tassel of a foot in length, lay beside it. Slippers of costly embroidery [illegible]

thread, and a most magnificent meerschaum, with a mounting of gold and rubies, was on the table, beside a pair of pistols, whose carved stocks were inlaid with a tracery of the finest workmanship. These I knew to be James's, for I had seen them with him; and there were various other articles equally splendid and costly, all new to me—such as card-cases, tablets, cigar-holders, and a most gorgeous dressing-case of gold and Bohemian glass, from which, really, I could scarcely tear myself away. I was well aware that James had set no limit to his personal extravagance; but these, and the display of rings, pins, buttons, shirt-studs, chains, and trinkets of all kinds, perfectly astounded me. And here let me remark, Kitty, that the young men of the present day far exceed us in all that pertains to this taste for ornamental jewellery. As my eyes ranged over these attractive and beautiful objects, I was particularly struck with an opal brooch, representing a parrot in the midst of palm-leaves. It was a most beautiful piece of enamel work, studded with gems of every brilliant hue.

It was, as you may imagine, far too pretty for a man's wear, and I resolved to profit by the occasion, to appropriate, or, as the Americans say, to "annex," it to my own possessions. I had just fastened it in the front of my dress, when the handle of the door turned, and—oh, Kitty! conceive my agony as I heard James's voice speaking from without! It was therefore not *his* chamber where I was standing, nor could the sleeper be *he!* Escape and concealment were my first thought, and I sprang behind a screen at the very moment the door opened. Should I live a hundred years, I shall never cease to remember the intense misery of that moment. You need only picture my situation to your own mind, to see how distressing it must have been. The certainty of being discovered if I made the slightest noise saved me from fainting, but I almost fancied that the loud beating of my heart might have betrayed me.

James came in without any peculiar deference for the sleeper's nerves, and, upsetting a chair or two, stumbled across the room towards the bed, on which he seated himself, calling out "George—Tiverton—old fellow! don't you mean to get up at all, to-day?"

Oh, Kitty! fancy my trembling terror as I heard that I was in the chamber of Lord George Tiverton. The very utmost I could do was to refrain from a scream; nor do I now know how I succeeded in repressing it.

It was not till after repeated efforts that James succeeded in awaking his friend, who at length, with a long-drawn sigh, exclaimed, "By Jove, Jemmy! I'm glad you routed me up. I've had a horrid dream. Only think, I imagined that I was still in the House of Lords listening to that confounded case! I fancied that Scratchley was addressing their Lordships in reply, and pledging himself to show that gross neglect, and even cruelty, could be proved

against me. The old scoundrel's harsh voice is still ringing in my ears, and I hear him tearing me to very tatters!"

"Was there anything of that sort?" said James, as he struck a light for his cigar and began smoking.

"Why, I must say, he was *not* complimentary. These fellows, you are aware, have a vocabulary of their own, and when setting up a defence for a pretty woman, married at seventeen, they pitch into one's little frailties at a very cruel rate. Not exactly that the narrative is very detrimental to a man's future prospects; what really damages you is what they call cruelty, and your wife's maid—particularly if she be a Frenchwoman—can always prove this."

"Indeed!" exclaimed James, in some astonishment.

"To be sure she can. Why, everything that thwarts her mistress in anything—good, bad, or indifferent—is cruelty in the French sense. You are rather given to fast acquaintances; you bring home with you to supper, some three or four times a week, detachments of that respectable company one meets at Tattersall's Yard, or in the Turf Club; chicken hazard and the coulisses of the Opera are amongst your weaknesses; you have a taste for sport, and would rather take the odds against the favourite than lay out your spare cash at Howell and James's. That's cruelty! When regularly done up in town, you make a bolt for Boulogne, or rush down to your shooting-box in the Highlands. That's more cruelty, and neglect besides! Terribly pressed for money, you try to bully your wife's uncle, one of the trustees to her settlement, and threaten to kick him down stairs. Gross cruelty! Harder up again, you pledge her diamonds. Shocking cruelty! Cleared out and sold up, you suggest the propriety of her sending away the French maid, and travelling up to Paris alone. That's monstrous cruelty! And, in fact, all together establish a clear justification for anything that may befal you. Besides this, Jemmy, if you marry a girl of good family, she is sure to have either a father, an uncle, or a brother, or perhaps some three or four cousins in the Lords: now, whatever comes off, they oppose your bill, and as their Lordships only want to hear your story, to listen to the piquant narrative of domestic differences and conjugal jarrings, nobody cares a straw whether you succeed or not. Give me a light, Jem."

They both continued to puff their cigars for some time in silence, during which my sufferings rose to absolute torture, for, in addition to the shocking circumstances of my own situation, was now the fact of my having overheard a most private conversation.

"So they threw out your bill?" asked James, after a pause.

"Deferred judgment!" replied the other, puffing, "which comes to pretty nigh the same thing. Asked for further evidence, explanations what not! Cursed cigars! don't draw at all."

"They're Bollard's best Havannahs."

"Well, perhaps I've been unlucky in my choice; if so, it's not the first time, Jem;" and he laughed heartily at the notion. "I say, take care and don't say anything about this affair of mine."

"But it will be in all the papers. The *Times* will give it to-morrow or next day."

"Not a bit of it—had a private hearing, old fellow. Too many good names compromised to have the thing made town talk—you understand."

"Ah, that's it!" said James.

"Yes, it's one of the few privileges remaining to what Lord Grey calls 'our order,' except, perhaps, the judgments of the London Magistrates. To do *them* justice, the fellows do know what a Lord is, and 'they act accordingly.' There, it's out at last"—and he threw away his cigar—"and I suppose I may as well think of getting up. Just draw that curtain, Jem, and open the shutter."

Oh, Kitty dearest, can you form to yourself any idea of my situation! James had already risen from the bedside, and was groping his way to the window. Another moment, and a flood of light would pour into the room and inevitably discover me. My agitation almost choked me; it was like a sense of drowning, and at the same time accompanied by the terrible thought that I must not dare to cry for succour. James was busy with the button of the window-fastening—another instant and it would be too late—and with the energy of utter despair I sprang from behind the screen, and then pushing it with all my force, upset it over the toilet-table, the whole tumbling against James with a horrid crash, and laying him prostrate beneath the ruins. I dashed from the room with the speed of lightning; I know not how I flew along the gallery, up the stairs, and gained my own chamber, but, as I turned the key inside, all consciousness left me, and I fell fainting on the floor. The noise of many footsteps on the corridor outside, and the sound of voices, aroused me. The fragments I could collect showed me that all were discussing the late catastrophe, and none able to explain it. Oh, Kitty, what a gush of delight rushed through me to hear that I had escaped unseen, unknown, unsuspected!

The general voice attributed the accident to James's awkwardness, and I could perceive that he had not escaped without some bruises.

It was a long time, too, ere I could turn my thoughts from my late peril to think of the strange revelation I had been witness to; nor was it without a certain shock to my feelings that I learned Lord George was married. His attentions to me were certainly particular, Kitty. No girl, with any knowledge of life, makes any mistake on the subject, because, if she entertains a doubt, she knows how at once to resolve it, by tests as unerring as those a chemist employs to discover arsenic.

Now, I had submitted him to one or two of these at times, and they all showed him to be "infallibly affected." With what a sense of disappointment, then, was I to hear that he was already married, the only alleviation being that he was seeking to dissolve the tie! Poor fellow! how completely did this unhappy circumstance explain many expressions whose meaning had hitherto puzzled me! How I saw through clouds and mists that once obscured the atmosphere of my hopes! And how readily did I forgive him for vacillation and uncertainty, which before had often distressed and displeased me. Until free, it was of course impossible that he could avow his sentiments undisguisedly, and now I recognised the noble character of the struggle that he had maintained with himself. Oh, Kitty, it is not only that "the course of true love never did run smooth," but it really could not be true love if it did so. The sluggish stream of common affection flows lazily along between the muddy banks and sedgy sides of ordinary life, but the boiling torrent of passionate love requires the rocks of difficulty to dam its course, and impart that character of foamy impetuosity that sweeps away every obstacle and dashes onward to its goal regardless of danger! I'm sure I feel quite convinced that such is the nature of Lord G.'s passion; and that now these stupid "Lords" have rejected his plea for a divorce, if he be not rescued by the hand of devoted affection, he may rush madly into every excess, and dissipate the great talents with which he is so remarkably gifted.

Be candid now, my darling Kitty, and confess frankly that you are greatly shocked at these doctrines, and your dear little Irish prudery blushes crimson at the bare thought of feeling even an interest in a man already married, and horrified at the notion of his hypothetical attentions. Yes, I see it all; your sweetly dimpled mouth is pursed up with conscious propriety, and you are arranging your features into all the sternness of judicial severity; but hear me for one moment in defence, if not in justification. All these things seem very dreadful to you in the solitudes of Tipperary, simply because of their infrequency. The man who has separated from his wife, or the woman divorced from her husband, are great criminals to your home-bred notions, and by your social code they are sentenced at once to a life of solitude and isolation; but in the real world, my dear Kitty, on the great stage of life, this severity would be downright absurdity; the category so mercilessly condemned by you is exactly that which contains the true salt of society; these are the very people that everybody calls charming, fascinating, delightful! All the elastic, buoyant natures, the joyous spirits, the invariable good tempers, the generous hearts one meets with, are amongst them. Why such happily gifted creatures should not have made their homes a Paradise, is a problem none can solve. It is like the squaring of the circle—the cause of Irish misery—or anything else you can think of equally inscrutable; but the fact is as I tell you; and if you will just run your eye over any list of fashionable company,

and select such as I speak of, believe me you will have extracted all the plums from the pudding. As for Lord George himself, a more delightful creature does not exist; and one has only to know him to be convinced that the woman who could not be happy with him must be a demon. Of the generous character he possesses, and at the same time the consummate tact of his manner, an instance grew out of the little event I have just related. In my confusion and embarrassment after escaping from the room, I totally forgot the brooch which I had placed in my dress, and actually came down to breakfast with it still there. Guess my shame and horror, Kitty, when James called out, across the table, "I say, Mary Anne, what a smart pin you've got there—one of the neatest things I have seen." I grew scarlet—then pale; and felt as if I was going to faint; when Lord George cried out, "It is, really, very tasty. I had one myself something like it, but the stones were emeralds, not rubies; and I think Miss Dodd's is prettier."

The man who could rescue one at such a conjuncture, Kitty, is worthy of all confidence, and so I told him by a glance. Meanwhile, he gave the conversation another turn by proposing a fishing excursion on the lake, and immediately after breakfast we all sallied forth to the water.

Notwithstanding his agreeability—and he never displayed it to greater advantage—I was silent and abstracted during the entire day. The embarrassment of my position was almost unendurable; and it was only as he took my arm, to conduct me back to the hotel, that I regained anything like courage.

"Why are you so serious?" said he. "Mind, I don't want a confession; only, that I have a secret for *your* ear, whenever you will trust *me* with one of yours."

I made him no answer, Kitty, but walked along in silence, and with my veil down.

I write all these things to my dearest friend with less reserve than I could recal them to my own memory in solitude. I tell her everything; and she is the true partner of my joys, my sorrows, my hopes, and my terrors. Yet must I leave much to her imagination to picture forth the state of my affections, and the troubled sea of my heart's emotions. And, oh! dearest, kindest, tenderest of all friends, do not mistake, do not misconstrue the feelings of your ever attached and devoted

MARY ANNE.

I wanted to tell you something of our future destination, and I have detained this for that purpose, but still everything is uncertain and undecided. Papa received a large packet, like law papers and leases, from Mr. Purcell yesterday, and has been occupied in perusing them ever since. We are in terror lest he should decide on going back; and every time he enters the room,

we are trembling in dread of the announcement. Mamma has had an hysterical attack in preparation for the moment, for the last twenty-four hours; and even if "no cause be shown," I fancy she will not throw away so much good agony for nothing, but take it out for what Sir Boyle Roach fought his duel – "miscellaneous reasons."

Cary is still staying with the Morrises. How she endures it I can't conceive: a half-pay lover, and a half-pay *ménage*, are two things that, to *me* at least, would be insupportable. The girl is really totally destitute of all proper pride, and makes the silly mistake of supposing that a spirit of independence is the best form of self-esteem. I suppose it will end by the "Captain's" proposing for her; but up to this, I believe, it is all friendship, regard, and so on.

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## LETTER X.

### KENNY JAMES DODD TO THOMAS PURCELL, ESQ., OF THE GRANGE, BRUFF.

Constance.

MY DEAR TOM,—I got the papers all safe. I am sure the account is perfectly correct. I only wish the balance was bigger. I waited here to receive these things, and now I discover that I can't sign the warrant of attorney except before a Consul, and there is none in this place, so that I must keep it over till I can find one of those pleasant functionaries—a class that, between ourselves, I detest heartily. They are a presumptuous, under-bred, consequential race—a cross between a small skipper and smaller Secretary of Legation, with a mixture of official pedantry and maritime off-handedness that is perfectly disgusting. Why our reforming economists don't root them all out I cannot conceive. Nobody wants, nobody benefits by them; and save that you are now and then called on for a "consular fee," you might never hear of their existence.

I don't rightly understand what you say about the loan from that Land Improvement Society. Do you mean that the money lent must be laid out on the land as a necessary condition? Is it possible that this is what I am to infer? If so, I never heard anything half so preposterous! Sure, if I raise five hundred pounds from a Jew, he has no right to stipulate that I must spend the cash on copper coal-skuttles or potted meats! I want it for my own convenience; enough for him that I comply with his demands for interest and repayment. Anything else would be downright tyranny and op-

pression, Tom—as a mere momentary consideration of the matter will show you. At all events, let us get the money, for I'd like to contest the point with these fellows; and if ever there was a man heart and soul determined to break down any antiquated barrier of cruelty or domination, it is your friend Kenny Dodd! As to that printed paper, with its twenty-seven queries, it is positive balderdash from beginning to end. What right have they to conclude that I approve of sub-soil draining? When did I tell them that I believed in Smith of Deanstown? Where is it on record that I gave in my adhesion to model cottages, Berkshire pigs, green crops, and guano manure? In what document do these appear? Maybe I have my own notions on these matters—maybe I keep them for my own guidance, too!

You say that the gentry is all changing throughout the whole land, and I believe you well, Tom Purcell. Changed indeed must they be if they subscribe to such preposterous humbug as this! At all events, I repeat we want the money, so fill up the blanks as you think best, and remit me the amount at your earliest, for I have barely enough to get to the end of the present month. I don't dislike this place at all. It is quiet, peaceful—humdrum, if you will; but we've had more than our share of racket and row lately, and the reclusion is very grateful. One day is exactly like another with us. Lord George—for he is back again—and James go a fishing as soon as breakfast is over, and only return for supper. Mary Anne reads, writes, sews, and sings. Mrs. D. fills up the time discharging Betty, settling with her, searching her trunks for missing articles, and being reconciled to her again, which, with occasional crying fits, and her usual devotions, don't leave her a single moment unoccupied! As for me, I'm trying to learn German, whenever I'm not asleep. I've got a master—he is a Swiss, and maybe his accent is not of the purest; but he is an amusing old vagabond—an umbrella-maker, but in his youth a travelling servant. His time is not very valuable to him, so that he sits with me sometimes for half a day; but still I make little progress. My notion is, Tom, that there's no use in either making love, or trying a new language, after you're five or six-and-twenty. It's all up-hill work after that, believe me. Neither your declensions nor declarations come natural to you, and it's a bungling performance at the best. The first condition of either is, to have your head perfectly free—as little in it as need be. So long as your thoughts are jostled by debts, duns, mortgages, and marriageable daughters, you'll have no room for vows or irregular verbs! It's lucky, however, that one can dispense both with the love and the learning, and indeed of the two—with the last best, for of all the useless, unprofitable kinds of labour ever pursued out of a gaol, acquiring a foreign language is the most. The few words required for daily necessaries, such as schnaps and cigars, are easily learnt; all beyond that is downright rubbish.

For what can a man express his thoughts in so well as his mother tongue?

with whom does he want to talk but his countrymen? Of course you come out with the old cant about "intelligent natives," "information derived at the fountain head," "knowledge obtained by social intimacy with people of the country." To which I briefly reply, "It's all gammon and stuff from beginning to end;" and what between *your* blunders in grammar and your informant's ignorance of fact, all such information isn't worth a "trauneen." Now, once for all, Tom, let me observe to you, that ask what you will of a foreigner, be it an inquiry into the financial condition of his country, its military resources, prison discipline, law, or religion, he'll never acknowledge his inability to answer, but give you a full and ready reply, with facts, figures, dates, and data, all in most admirable order. At first you are overjoyed with such ready resources of knowledge. You flatter yourself that even with the most moderate opportunities you cannot fail to learn much; by degrees, however, you discover errors in your statistics, and at last, you come to find out that your accomplished friend, too polite to deny you a reasonable gratification, had gone to the pains of inventing a Code, a Church, and a Coinage for your sole use and benefit, but without the slightest intention of misleading, for it never once entered his head that you could possibly believe him! I know it will sound badly. I am well aware of the shock it will give to many a nervous system; but for all that I will not blink the declaration—which I desire to record as formally and as flatly as I am capable of expressing it—which is, that of one hundred statements an Englishman accepts and relies upon abroad, as matter of fact, ninety-nine are untrue; full fifty being lies by premeditation, thirty by ignorance, ten by accident or inattention, and the remainder, if there be a balance, for I'm bad at figures, from any other cause you like.

It is no more disgrace for a foreigner not to tell the truth than to own that he does not sing, nor dance the mazurka, not so much, indeed, because these are marks of a polite education. And yet it is to hold conversation with these people we pore over dictionaries, and Ollendorfs, and Hamiltonian gospels. As for the enlargement and expansion of the intelligence that comes of acquiring languages, there never was a greater fallacy. Look abroad upon your acquaintances: who are the glib linguists, who are the faultless in French genders, and the immaculate in German declensions? the flippant boarding-school miss, or the brainless, unpaid attaché, that cannot compose a note in his own language. Who are the bungling conversers that make drawing rooms blush and dinner-tables titter? your first-rate debater in the Commons, your leader at the bar, your double first, or your great electro-magnetic fellow that knows the secret laws of water-spouts and whirlpools, and can make thunder and lightning just to amuse himself. Take my word for it, your linguist is as poor a creature as a dancing-master, and just as great a formalist.

If you ask me, then, why I devote myself to such unrewarding labour, I answer, "It is true I know it to be so, but my apology is, that I make no progress." No, Tom, I never advance a step. I can neither conjugate nor decline, and the auxiliary verbs will never aid me in anything. So far as my lingual incapacity goes, I might be one of the great geniuses of the age; and very probably I am, too, without knowing it!

I have little to tell you of the place itself. It is a quaint old town on the side of the lake; the most remarkable object being the minster, or cathedral. They show you the spot in the aisle where old Huss stood to receive his sentence of death. Even after a lapse of centuries, there was something affecting to stand where a man once stood to hear that he was to be burned alive. Of course I have little sympathy with a heretic, but still I venerate the martyr, the more, since I am strongly disposed to think that it is one of those characters which are not the peculiar product of an age of railroads and submarine telegraphs. The expansion of the intelligence, Tom, seems to be in the inverse ratio of the expansion of the conscience, and the stubborn old spirit of right that was once the mode, would, now-a-days, be construed into a dogged, stupid bull-headedness, unworthy of the enlightenment of our glorious era. Take my word for it, there's a great many eloquent and indignant letter-writers in the newspapers would shrink from old Huss's test for their opinions, and a fossil elk is not a greater curiosity than would be a man ready to stake life on his belief. When a fellow tells you of "dying on the floor of the House," he simply means that he'll talk till there's a "count out;" and as for "registering vows in heaven," and "wasting out existence in the gloom of a dungeon," it's just balderdash, and nothing else.

The simple fact is this, Tom Purcell: we live in an age of universal cant, and I swallow all *your* shams on the easy condition that you swear to *mine*, and whenever I hear people praising the present age, and extolling its wonderful progress, and all that, I just think of all the quackery I see advertised in the newspapers, and sigh heartily to myself at our degradation! Why, man, the "Patent Pills for the Cure of Cancer," and the Agapemone, would disgrace the middle ages! And it is not a little remarkable that England, so prone to place herself at the head of civilisation, is exactly the very metropolis of all this humbug!

To come back to ourselves, I have to report that James arrived here a couple of days ago. He followed that scoundrel "the Baron" for thirty hours, and only desisted from the pursuit when his horse could go no further. The police authorities mainly contributed to the escape of the fugitive, by detaining James on every possible occasion, and upon any or no pretext. The poor fellow reached Freyburg dead beat, and without a sou in his pocket; but good luck would have it that Lord George Tiverton had just arrived there,

so that by his aid he came on here, where they both made their appearance at breakfast on Tuesday morning.

Lord George, I suspect, has not made a successful campaign of it lately; though in what he has failed—if it be failure—I have no means of guessing. He looks a little out at elbows, however, and travels without a servant. In spirits and bearing I see no change in him; but these fellows, I have remarked, never show depression, and india-rubber itself is not so elastic as a bad character! I don't half fancy his companionship for James; but I know well that this opinion would be treated by the rest of the family as downright heresy; and certainly he is an amusing dog, and it is impossible to resist liking him; but there lies the very peril I am afraid of. If your loose fish, as the slang phrase calls them, were disagreeable chaps—prosy, selfish, sententious—vulgar in their habits, and obtrusive in their manners, one would run little risk of contamination; but the reverse is the case, Tom—the very reverse! Meet a fellow that speaks every tongue of the Continent dresses to perfection, rides and drives admirably, a dead shot with the pistol, a sure cue at billiards—if he be the delight of every circle he goes into—look out sharp in the *Times*, and the odds are, that there's a handsome reward offered for him, and he's either a forger or a defaulter. The truth is, a man may be ill-mannered as a great lawyer, or a great physician; he may make a great figure in the field or the cabinet; there may be no end to his talents as a geometrician or a chemist; it's only your adventurer must be well-bred, and swindling is the solitary profession to which a man must bring fascinating manners, a good address, personal advantages, and the power of pleasing. I own to you, Tom Purcell, I like these fellows, and I can't help it! I take to them as I do to twenty things that are agreeable at the time, but are sure to disagree with me—afterwards. They rally me out of my low spirits, they put me on better terms with myself, and they administer that very balmy flattery that says, "Don't distress yourself, Kenny Dodd. As the world goes, you're better than nine-tenths of it. You'd be hospitable, if you could; you'd pay your debts, if you could; and there wouldn't be an easier tempered, more good-natured creature breathing than yourself, if it was only the will was wanting!" Now, these are very soothing doses when a man is scarified by duns, and flayed alive by lawsuits; and when a fellow comes to my time of life, he can no more bear the candid rudeness of what is called friendship than an ex-Lord Mayor could endure Penitentiary diet!

I must confess, however, that whenever we come to divide on any question, Lord George always votes with Mrs. D. He told me once, that with respect to Parliament, he always sided with the Government, whatever it was, when he could, and perhaps he follows the same rule in private life. Last night, after tea, we discussed our future movements, and I found him strongly in

favour of getting us on to Italy for the winter. I didn't like to debate the matter exactly on financial grounds, but I hazarded a half-conjecture that the expedition would be a costly one. He stopped me at once. "Up to this time," said he, "you have really not benefited by the cheapness of continental living"—that was certainly true—"and for this simple reason, you have always lived in the beaten track of the wandering Cockney. You must go further away from England. You must reach those places where people settle as residents, not ramble as tourists; you will then be rewarded, not only economically, but socially. The markets and the morals are both better; for our countrymen filter by distance, and the further from home the purer they become." To Mrs. D. and Mary Anne he gave a glowing description of Trans-Alpine existence, and rapturously pictured forth the fascinations of Italian life. I can only give you the items, Tom; you must arrange them for yourself. So make what you can of starry skies, olives, ices, tenors, volcanoes, music, mountains, and maccaroni. He appealed to *me* by the budget. Never was there such cheapness in the known world. The Italian nobility were actually crushed down with house-accommodation, and only entreated a stranger to accept of a palace or a villa. The climate produced everything without labour, and consequently without cost. Fruit had no price; wine was about twopence a bottle; a strong tap rose to two and a half! Clothes one scarcely needed; and, except for decency, "nothing and a cocked-hat" would suffice. These were very seductive considerations, Tom; and I own to you that, even allowing a large margin for exaggeration, there was a great amount of solid advantage remaining. Mrs. D. adduced an additional argument when we were alone, and in this wise: What was to be done with the wedding finery if we should return to Ireland: for all purposes of home life they would be totally inapplicable. You might as well order a service of plate to serve up potatoes as introduce Paris fashions and foreign elegance into our provincial circle. "We have the things now," said she; "let us have the good of them." I remember a cask of Madeira being left with my father once, by a mistake, and that was the very reason he gave for drinking it. She made a strong case of it, Tom: she argued the matter well, laying great stress upon the duty we owed our girls, and the necessity of "getting them married before we went back." Of course, I didn't give in. If I was to give her the notion that she could convince me of anything, we'd never have a moment's peace again, so I said I'd reflect on the subject, and turn it over in my mind. And now, I want you to say what disposable cash can we lay our hands on for the winter. I am more than ever disinclined to have anything to say to these Drainage Commissioners. It's our pockets they drain, and not our farms. I'd rather try and raise a trifle on mortgage; for you see, now-a-days, they have got out of the habit of doing it, and there's many a one has money lying idle and doesn't know what to do with it. Look

out for one of these fellows, Tom, and see what you can do with him. Dear me, isn't it a strange thing the way one goes through life, and the contrivances one is put to to make two ends meet!

I remember the time, and so do you, too, when an Irish gentleman could raise what he liked; and there wasn't an estate in my own county wasn't encumbered, as they call it, to more than double its value. There's fellows will tell you "that's the cause of all the present distress." Not a bit of it. They're all wrong! It is because that system has come to an end that we are ruined; that's the root of the evil, Tom Purcell; and if I was in Parliament I'd tell them so. Where will you find any one willing to lend money now, if the estate wouldn't pay it? We may thank the English Government for that; and, as poor Dan used to say, "They know as much about us as the Chinese!"

I can't answer your question about James. Vickars has not replied to my last two letters; and I really see no opening for the boy whatever. I mean to write, however, in a day or two to Lord Muddleton, to whom Lord George is nearly related and ask for something in the Diplomatic way. Lord G. says it's the only career now-a-days doesn't require some kind of qualification—since even in the army they've instituted a species of examination. "Get him made an Attaché somewhere," says Tiverton, "and he must be a 'Plenipo' at last." J. is good looking, and a great deal of dash about him; and I'm informed that's exactly what's wanting in the career. If nothing comes of this application, I'll think seriously of Australia; but, of course, Mrs. D. must know nothing about it; for, according to *her* notions, the boy ought to be Chamberlain to the Queen, or Gold-stick at least.

I don't know whether I mentioned to you that Betty Cobb had entered the holy bonds with a semi-civilised creature she picked up in the Black Forest. The orang-outang is now a part of our household at least so far as living at rack and manger at my cost—though in what way to employ him I have not the slightest notion. Do you think, if I could manage to send him over to Ireland, that we could get him indicted for any transportable offence? Ask Curtis about it; for I know he did something of the kind once in the case of a natural son of Tony Barker's, and the lad is now a judge, I believe, in Sydney.

Cary is quite well. I heard from her yesterday, and when I write, I'll be sure to send her your affectionate message. I don't mean to leave this till I hear from you. So write immediately. and believe me,

Very sincerely your friend,

KENNY JAMES DODD.

## LETTER XI.

JAMES DODD TO ROBERT DOOLAN, ESQ., TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.

Bregenz.

My dear Bob,—I had made up my mind not to write to you till we had quitted this place, where our life has been of the "slowest;" but this morning has brought a letter with a piece of good news which I cannot defer imparting to you. It is a communication from the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs to the Governor, to say that I have been appointed to something somewhere, and that I am to come over to London, and be examined by somebody. Very vague all this, but I suppose it's the style of diplomacy, and one will get used to it. The real bore is the examination, for George told "Dad" that there was none, and, in fact, that very circumstance it was which gave the peculiar value to the "service." Tiverton tells me, however, he can make it "all safe;" whether you "tip" the Secretary, or some of the underlings, I don't know. Of course there is a way in all these things, for half the fellows that pass are just as ignorant as your humble servant.

I am mainly indebted to Tiverton for the appointment, for he wrote to everybody he could think of, and made as much interest as if it was for himself. He tells me in confidence, that the list of names down is about six feet long, and actually wonders at the good fortune of my success. From all I can learn, however, there is no salary at first, so that the Governor must "stump out handsome," for an Attaché is expected to live in a certain style, keep horses, and, in fact, come it "raythcr strongish." In some respects, I should have preferred the Army; but then there are terrible drawbacks in colonial banishment, whereas, in Diplomacy, you are at least stationed in the vicinity of a Court, which is always something.

wonder where I am to be gazetted for; I hope Naples, but even Vienna would do. In the midst of our universal joy at my good fortune, it's not a little provoking to see the Governor pondering over all it will cost for outfit, and wondering if the post be worth the gold lace on the uniform. Happily for me, Bob, he never brought me up to any profession, as it is called, and it is too late now to make me anything either in law or physic. I say happily, because I see plainly enough that he'd refuse the present opportunity if he knew of any other career for me. My Mother does not improve matters by little

jokes on his low tastes and vulgar ambitions; and, in fact, the announcement has brought a good deal of discussion and some discord amongst us.

I own to you, frankly, that once named to a Legation, I will do my utmost to persuade the Governor to go back to Ireland. In the first place, nothing but a very rigid economy at Dodsborough will enable him to make me a liberal allowance; and secondly, to have my family prowling about the Legation to which I was attached, would be perfectly insufferable. I like to have my Father and Mother what theatrical folk call "practicable," that is, good for all efficient purposes of bill-paying, and such-like; but I shudder at the notion of being their pioneer into fashionable life; and, indeed, I am not aware of any one having carried his parent on his back since the days of Æneas.

I am obliged to send you a very brief despatch, for I'm off to-morrow for London, to make my bow at "F. O.," and kiss hands on my appointment. I'd have liked another week here, for the fishing has just come in, and we killed yesterday, with two rods, eleven large, and some thirty small trout. They are a short, thick-shouldered kind of fish, ready enough to rise, but sluggish to play afterwards. The place is pretty, too; the Swiss Alps at one side, and the Tyrol mountains at the other. Bregenz itself stands well, on the very verge of the lake, and although not ancient enough to be curious in architecture, has a picturesque air about it. The people are as primitive as anything one can well fancy, and wear a costume as ungracefully barbarous as any lover of nationality could desire. Their waists are close under their arms, and the longest petticoats I have yet seen finish at the knee! They affect, besides, a round, low-crowned cap, like a fur turban, or else a great piece of filigree silver, shaped like a peacock's tail, and fastened to the back of the head. Nature, it must be owned, has been somewhat ungenerous to them; and with the peculiar advantages conferred on them by costume, they are the ugliest creatures I've ever set eyes on.

It is only just to remark that Mary Anne dissents from me in all this, and has made various "studies" of them, which are, after all, not a whit more flattering than my own description. As to a good-looking peasantry, Bob, it's all humbug. It's only the well-to-do classes, in any country, have pretensions to beauty. The woman of rank numbers amongst her charms the unmistakable stamp of her condition. Even in her gait, like the Goddess in Virgil, she displays her divinity. The pretty "bourgeoise" has her peculiar fascination in the brilliant intelligence of her laughing eye, and the sly archness of her witty mouth; but your peasant beauty is essentially heavy and dull. It is of the earth, earthy; and there is a bucolic grossness about the lips the very antithesis to the pleasing. I'm led to these remarks by the question in your last as to the character of continental physiognomy. Up

to this, Bob, I have seen nothing to compare with our own people, and you will meet more pretty faces between Stephen's Green and the Rotunda than between Schaffhausen and the sea. I'm not going to deny that they "make up" better abroad, but our boast is the raw material of beauty. The manufactured article we cannot dispute with them. It would be, however, a great error to suppose that the artistic excellence I speak of is a small consideration; on the contrary, it is a most important one, and well deserving of deep thought and reflection, and, I must say, that all our failures in the decorative arts are as nothing to our blunders when attempting to adorn beauty. A French woman, with a skin like an old drumhead, and the lower jaw of a baboon, will actually "get herself up" to look better than many a really pretty girl of our country, disfigured by unbecoming hairdressing, ill-assorted colours, ill put on clothes, and that confounded walk, which is a cross between the stride of a Grenadier and running in a sack!

With all our parade of Industrial Exhibitions, and shows of National Productions lately, nobody has directed his attention to this subject, and for *my* part, I'd infinitely rather know that our female population had imbibed some notions of dress and self-adornment from their French neighbours, than that Glasgow could rival Genoa in velvet, or that we beat Bohemia out of the field in coloured glass. If the proper study of mankind be man—which of course includes woman—we are throwing a precious deal of time away on centrifugal pumps, sewing machines, and self-acting razors. If I ever get into Parliament, Bob, and I don't see why I should not, when once fairly launched in the Diplomatic line, I'll move for a Special Commission, not to examine into foreign railroads, or mines, or schools, or smelting-houses, but to inquire into, and report upon, how the women abroad, with not a tenth of the natural advantages, contrive to look—I won't say better—but more fascinating than our own, and how it is that they convert something a shade below plainness into features of downright pleasing expression!

Since this appointment has come, I have been working away to brush up my French and German, which you will be surprised to hear is pretty nearly where it was when we first came abroad. We English herd so much together, and continue to follow our home habits, and use our own language, wherever we happen to be, that it is not very easy to break out of the beaten track. This observation applies only to the men of the family, for our sisters make a most astonishing progress, under the guidance of those mustachioed and well-whiskered gents they meet at balls. The Governor and my Mother of course believe that I am as great a linguist as Mezzofanti, if that be the fellow's name, and I shall try and keep up the delusion to the last. It is not quite impossible I may have more time for my studies here than I fancy, for "Dad" has come in, this moment, to say that he hasn't got five shillings towards the expenses of my journey to London, nor has he any very immediate

prospect of a remittance from Ireland. What a precious mess will it be if my whole career in life is to be sacrificed for a shabby hundred or two. The Governor appears to have spent about three times as much as he speculated on, and our affairs at this moment present as pleasant a specimen of hopeless entanglement as a Counsel in Bankruptcy could desire.

I wish I was out of the ship altogether, Bob, and would willingly adventure on the broad ocean of life in a punt, were it only my own. I trust that by the time this reaches you, her Majesty's gracious pleasure will have numbered me amongst the servants of the Crown; but whether in high or humble estate, believe me ever

Unalterably yours,
JAMES DODD.

P.S.—My sister Cary has written to say she will be here to-night or to-morrow; she is coming expressly to see me before I go; but from all that I can surmise she need not have used such haste. What a bore it will be if the Governor should not be able to "stump out." I'm in a perfect fever at the very thought

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## LETTER XII.

CAROLINE DODD TO MISS COX, AT MISS MINCING'S ACADEMY, BLACK ROCK, IRELAND.

MY DEAR MISS COX,—It would appear from your last, that a letter of mine to you must have miscarried; for I most distinctly remember having written to you on the topics you allude to, and, so far as I was able, answered all your kind inquiries about myself and my pursuits. Lest my former note should ever reach you, I do not dare to go over again the selfish narrative, which would task even your friendship to peruse once.

I remained with my kind friend, Mrs. Morris, till three days ago, when I came here to see my brother James, who has been promised some Government employment, and is obliged to repair at once to London. Mamma terrified me greatly by saying that he was to go to China or to India, so that I hurried back to see and stay with him as much as I could before he left us. I rejoice, however, to tell you that his prospects are in the Diplomatic service, and he will be most probably named to a Legation in some European capital.

He is a dear, kind-hearted boy; and, although not quite untainted by the corruptions which are more or less inseparable from this rambling existence, is still as fresh in his affections, and as generous in nature, as when he left home. Captain Morris, whose knowledge of life is considerable, predicts most favourably of him, and has only one misgiving—the close intimacy he maintains with Lord George Tiverton. Towards this young nobleman the Captain expresses the greatest distrust and dislike; feelings that I really own seem to me to be frequently tinctured by a degree of prejudice rather than suggested by reason. It is true, no two beings can be less alike than they are. The one, rigid and unbending in all his ideas of right, listening to no compromise, submitting to no expediency, reserved towards strangers even to the verge of stiffness, and proud from a sense that his humble station might by possibility expose him to freedoms he could not reciprocate. The other, all openness and candour, pushed probably to an excess, and not unfrequently transgressing the barrier of an honourable self-esteem; without the slightest pretension to principle of any kind, and as ready to own his own indifference as to ridicule the profession of it by another. Yet, with all this, kind and generous in all his impulses, ever willing to do a good-natured thing; and, so far as I can judge, even prepared to bear a friendly part at the hazard of personal inconvenience.

Characters of this stamp are, as you have often observed to me, far more acceptable to very young men than those more swayed by rigid rules of right; and when they join to natural acuteness considerable practical knowledge of life, they soon obtain a great influence over the less gifted and less experienced. I see this in James; for, though not by any means blind to the blemishes in Lord George's character, nor even indifferent to them, yet is he submissive to every dictate of his will, and an implicit believer in all his opinions. But why should I feel astonished at this? Is not his influence felt by every member of the family; and Papa himself, with all his native shrewdness, strongly disposed to regard his judgments as wise and correct. I remark this the more, because I have been away from home; and after an absence one returns with a mind open to every new impression; nor can I conceal from myself that many of the notions I now see adopted and approved of, are accepted as being those popular in high society, and not because of their intrinsic correctness. Had we remained in Ireland, my dear Miss Cox, this had never been the case. There is a corrective force in the vicinity of those who have known us long and intimately, who can measure our pretensions by our station, and pronounce upon our mode of life from the knowledge they have of our condition; and this discipline, if at times severe and even unpleasant, is, upon the whole, beneficial to us. Now, abroad, this wholesome—shall I call it—"surveillance" is wanting altogether, and people are induced by its very absence to give themselves airs, and assume a style

quite above them. From that very moment they insensibly adopt a new standard of right and wrong, and substitute fashion and conventionality for purity and good conduct. I'm sure I wish we were back in Dodsborough with all my heart! It is not that there are not objects and scenes of intense interest around us here on every hand. Even I can feel that the mind expands by the variety of impressions that continue to pour in upon it. Still, I would not say that these things may not be bought too dearly, and that if the price they cost is discontent at our lot in life, a craving ambition to be higher and richer, and a cold shrinking back from all of our own real condition, they are unquestionably not worth the sacrifice.

To really enjoy the Continent, it is not necessary—at least for people bred and brought up as we have been—to be very rich, on the contrary, many—ay, and the greatest—advantages of continental travel are open to very small fortunes, and very small ambitions Scenery, climate, inexpensive acquaintanceship, galleries, works of art, public libraries, gardens, promenades, are all available The Morrises have certainly much less to live on than we have, and yet they have travelled over every part of Europe, know all its cities well, and never found the cost of living considerable. You will smile when I tell you that the single secret for this is, not to cultivate English society. Once make up your mind abroad to live with the people of the country, French German, and Italian—and there is no class of these above the reach of well-bred English—and you need neither shine in equipage, nor excel in a cook. There is no pecuniary test of respectability abroad, partly because this vulgarity is the offspring of a commercial spirit, which is of course not the general characteristic, and partly from the fact, that many of the highest names have been brought down to humble fortunes by the accidents of war and revolution, and poverty is consequently no evidence of deficient birth Our gorgeous notions of hospitality are certainly very fine things, and well become great station and large fortune, but are ruinous when they are imitated by inferior means and humble incomes Foreigners are quite above such vulgar mimicry, and nothing is more common to hear than the avowal, ' I am too poor to do this, my fortune would not admit of that,' not uttered in a mock humility, or with the hope of a polite incredulity, but in all the unaffected simplicity with which one mentions a personal fact, to which no shame or disgrace attaches. You may imagine, then, how unimpressively fall upon the ear all those pompous announcements by which we travelling English herald our high and mighty notions; the palaces we are about to hire, the fêtes we are going to give, and the other splendours we mean to indulge in.

I have read and re read that part of your letter wherein you speak of your wish to come and live abroad, so soon as the fruits of your life of labour will enable you Oh, my dear kind governess, with what emotion the words

filled me—emotions very different from those you ever suspected they would call up; for I bethought me how often I and others must have added to that toilsome existence by our indolence, our carelessness, and our wilfulness. In a moment there rose before me the anxieties you must have suffered, the cares you must have endured, the hopes for those who threw all their burdens upon *you*, and left to *you* the blame of *their* short-comings and the reproach of *their* insufficiency.

What rest, what repose would ever requite such labour! How delighted am I to say, that there are places abroad where even the smallest fortunes will suffice. I profited by the permission you gave me to show your letter to Mrs. Morris, and she gave me in return a list of places for you to choose from, at any one of which you could live with comfort for less than you speak of. Some are in Belgium, some in Germany, and some in Italy. Think, for instance, of a small house on the "Meuse," in the midst of the most beauteous scenery, and with a country teeming in every abundance around you, for twelve pounds a year, and all the material of life equally cheap in proportion. Imagine the habits of a Grand-Ducal capital, where the Prime Minister receives three hundred per annum, and spends two; where the admission to the theatre is fourpence, and you go to a Court dinner on foot at four o'clock in the day, and sit out of an evening with your work in a public garden afterwards.

Now, I know that in Ireland or Scotland, and perhaps in Wales too, places might be discovered where all the ordinary wants of life would not be dearer than here, but then remember, that to live with this economy at home, you subject yourself to all that pertains to a small estate; you endure the barbarising influences of a solitary life, or, what is worse, the vulgarity of village society. The well-to-do classes, the educated and refined, will not associate with you. Not so here. Your small means are no barrier against your admission into the best circles; you will be received anywhere. Your black silk gown will be "toilet" for the "Minister's reception," your white muslin will be good enough for a ball at Court! When the army numbers in its cavalry fifty hussars, and one battalion for its infantry, the simple resident need never blush for his humble retinue, nor feel ashamed that a maid-servant escorts him to a Court entertainment with a lantern, or that a latch-key and a lucifer-match do duty for a hall-porter and a chandelier!

One night—I was talking of these things—Captain Morris quoted a Latin author to the effect "that poverty had no such heavy infliction as in its power to make people ridiculous." The remark sounds at first an unfeeling one, but there is yet a true and deep philosophy in it, for it is in our own abortive and silly attempts to gloss over narrow fortune that the chief sting of poverty resides, and the ridicule alluded to is all of our making! The poverty of two thousand a year can be thus as glaringly absurd—as ridiculous,

as that of two hundred, and even more so, since its failures are more conspicuous.

Now, had we been satisfied to live in this way, it is not alone that we should have avoided debt and embarrassment, but we should really have profited largely besides. I do not speak of the negative advantages of not mingling with those it had been better to have escaped, but that in the society of these smaller capitals there is, especially in Germany, a highly cultivated and most instructive class, slightly pedantic, it may be, but always agreeable and always affable. The domesticity of Germany is little known to us, since even their writers afford few glimpses of it. There are no Bulwers, nor Bozes, nor Thackerays to show the play of passion, nor the working of deep feeling around the family board and hearth. The cares of fathers, the hopes of sons, the budding anxieties of the girlish heart, have few chroniclers. How these people think, and act, and talk at home, and in the secret circle of their families, we know as little as we do of the Chinese. It may be that the inquiry would require long and deep, and almost microscopic study. Life with them is not as with us, a stormy wave-tossed ocean; it is rather a calm and landlocked bay. They have no colonial empires, no vast territories [illegible] to revel in, nor great enterprise to speculate on. There are neither gigantic schemes of wealth, nor gold-fields to tempt them. Existence presents few prizes, and as few vicissitudes. The march of events is slow, even, and monotonous, and men conform themselves to the same measure! How, then, do they live—what are their loves, their hates, their ambitions, their crosses, their troubles, and their joys? How are they moved to pity—how stirred to revenge? I own to you I cannot even fancy this. The German heart seems to me a clasped volume, and even Goethe has but shown us a chance page or two, gloriously illustrated, I acknowledge, but closed as quickly as displayed.

Is Marguerite herself a type? I wish some one would tell me. Is that childlike gentleness, that trustful nature, that resistless, passionate devotion, warring with her piety, and yet heightened by it, are these German traits? They seem so, and yet do these Frauleins that I see, with yellow hair, appear capable of this headlong and impetuous love? Faust, I'm convinced, is true to his nationality. He loves like a German—and is mad, and mystical, fond, dreamy, and devoted by turns.

But all these are not what I look for. I want a family picture—a Teerburgh or a Mieris—painted by a German Dickens, or touched by a native Titmarsh. So far as I have read of it, too, the German Drama does not fill up this void; the comedies of the stage present nothing identical of the people, and yet it appears to me they are singularly good materials for portraiture. The stormy incidents of university life, its curious vicissitudes, and its strange, half-crazed modes of thought, blend into the quiet realities of

after-life, and make up men such as one sees nowhere else. The tinge of romance they have contracted in boyhood is never thoroughly washed out of their natures, and although statecraft may elevate them to be grave privy councillors, or good fortune select them for its revenue officers, they cherish the old memories of Halle and Heidelberg, and can grow valorous over the shape of a rapier, or pathetic about the colour of Fräulein Lydchen's hair.

It is, doubtless, very presumptuous in *me* to speak thus of a people of whom I have seen so little; but bear in mind, my dear Miss Cox, that I'm rather giving Mrs. Morris's experiences than my own, and, in some cases, in her own very words. She has a very extensive acquaintance in Germany, and corresponds, besides, with many very distinguished persons of that country. Perhaps private letters give a better insight into the habits of a people than most other things, and if so, one should pronounce very favourably of German character from the specimens I have seen. There are, everywhere, great truthfulness, great fairness; a willingness to concede to others a standard different from their own; a hopeful tone in all things, and extreme gentleness towards women and children. Of rural life, and of scenery, too, they speak with true feeling; and, as Sir Walter said of Goethe, "they understand trees."

You will wish to hear something of Bregenz, where we are staying at present, and I have little to say beyond its situation in a little bay on the Lake of Constance, begirt with high mountains, amidst which stretches a level flat, traversed by the Rhine. The town itself is scarcely old enough to be picturesque, though from a distance on the lake the effect is very pleasing. A part is built upon a considerable eminence, the ascent to which is by a very steep street, impassable save on foot; at the top of this is an old gateway, the centre of which is ornamented by a grotesque attempt at sculpture, representing a female figure seated on a horse, and, to all seeming, traversing the clouds. The phenomenon is explained by a legend, that tells how a Bregenzer maiden, some three and a half centuries ago, had gone to seek her fortune in Switzerland, and becoming domesticated there in a family, lived for years among the natural enemies of her people. Having learned, by an accident one night, that an attack was meditated on her native town, she stole away unperceived, and, taking a horse, swam the current of the Rhine, and reached Bregenz in time to give warning of the threatened assault, and thus rescued her kinsmen and her birthplace from sack and slaughter. This is the act commemorated by the sculpture, and the stormy waves of the river are doubtless typified in what seem to be clouds.

There is, however, a far more touching memory of the heroism preserved than this, for, each night, as the watchman goes his round of the village, when he comes to announce midnight, he calls aloud the name of her who at the

same dead hour, three centuries back, came to wake the sleeping town and tell them of their peril. I do not know of a monument so touching as this! No bust nor statue, no group of marble or bronze, can equal in association the simple memory transmitted from age to age, and preserved ever fresh and green in the hearts of a remote generation. As one thinks of this, the mind at once reverts to the traditions of the early Church, and insensibly one is led to feel the beauty of those transmitted words and acts, which, associated with place, and bound up with customs not yet obsolete, gave such impressive truthfulness to all the story of our faith. At the same time, it is apparent that the current of tradition cannot long run pure. Even now there are those who scoff at the grateful record of the Bregenzer maiden! Where will her memory be five years after the first railroad traverses the valley of the Vorarlberg? The shrill whistle of the "express" is the death-note to all the romance of life!

Some deplore this, and assert that, with this immense advancement of scientific discovery, we are losing the homely virtues of our fathers. Others pretend that we grow better as we grow wiser, and that increased intelligence is but another form of enlarged goodness. To myself, the great change seems to be that every hour of this progress diminishes the influence of woman, and that, as men grow deeper and deeper engaged in the pursuits of wealth, the female voice is less listened to, and its counsels less heeded and cared for.

But why do I dare to hazard such conjectures to you, so far more capable of judging, so much more able to solve questions like this!

I am sorry not to be able to speak more confidently about my music; but although Germany is essentially the land of song, there is less domestic cultivation of the art than I had expected; or, rather, it is made less a matter of display. Your mere acquaintances, seldom or never will sing for your amusement, your friends as rarely refuse you. To our notions, also, it seems strange that men are more given to the art here than women. The Frau is almost entirely devoted to household cares. Small fortunes and primitive habits seem to require this, and certainly no one who has ever witnessed the domestic peace of a German family could find fault with the system.

What has most struck me of all here, is the fact, that while many of the old people retain a freshness of feeling, and a warm susceptibility that is quite remarkable, the children are uniformly grave, even to sadness. The bold, dashing, half-reckless boy; the gay, laughing, high-spirited girl, have no types here. The season of youth, as we understand it, in all its jocund merriment, its frolics, and its wildness, has no existence amongst them. The child of ten seems weighted with the responsibilities of manhood; the little sister carries her keys about, and scolds the maids with all the semblance of

maternal rigour. Would that these liquid blue eyes had a more laughing look, and that pretty mouth could open to joyous laughter!

With all these drawbacks, it is still a country that I love to live in, and should leave with regret; besides that, I have as yet seen but little of it, and its least remarkable parts.

Whither we go hence, and when, are points that I cannot inform you on I am not sure, indeed, if any determination on the subject has been come to. Mamma and Mary Anne seem most eager for Rome and Naples; but though I should anticipate a world of delight and interest in these cities, I am disposed to think that they would prove far too expensive—at least with our present tastes and habits.

Wherever my destiny, however, I shall not cease to remember my dear governess, nor to convey to her, in all the frankness of my affection, every thought and feeling of her sincerely attached

CAROLINE DODD.

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## LETTER XIII.

MRS. DODD TO MRS. MARY GALLAGHER, DODSBOROUGH.

Bregenz.

MY DEAR MOLLY,—It's well I ever got your last letter, for it seems there's four places called Freyburg, and they tried the three wrong ones first, and I believe they opened and read it everywhere it stopped. "Much good may it do them," says I, "if they did!" They know at least the price of wool in Kinnegad, and what boneens is bringing in Ballinasloe, not to mention the news you tell of Betty Walsh! I thought I cautioned you before not to write anything like a secret when the letter came through a foreign post, seeing that the police reads everything, and if there's a word against themselves, you're ordered over the frontier in six hours. That's liberty, my dear! But that is not the worst of it, for nobody wants the dirty spalpeens to read about their private affairs, nor to know the secrets of their families. I must say, you are very unguarded in this respect, and poor Betty's mishap is now known to the Emperor of Prussia and the King of Sweden, just as well as to Father Luke and the Coadjutor; and as they say that these Courts are always exchanging gossip with each other, it will be back in England by the time this

reaches you. Let it be a caution to you in future, or, if you must allude to these events, do it in a way that can't be understood, as you may remark they do in the newspapers. I wish you wouldn't be tormenting me about coming home and living among my own people, as you call it. Let them pay up the arrears first, Molly, before they think of establishing any claim of the kind on your humble servant. But the fact is, my dear, the longer you live abroad, the more you like it; and going back to the strict rules and habits of England, after it, is for all the world like putting on a strait waistcoat. If you only heard foreigners the way they talk of us, and we all the while thinking ourselves the very pink of the creation!

But of all the things they're most severe upon is Sunday. The manner we pass the day, according to their notions, is downright barbarism. No diversion of any kind, no dancing, nor theatres, shops shut up, and nothing legal but intoxication. I always tell them that the fault isn't ours, that it's the Protestants that do these things; for, as Father Maher says, "they'd put a lid of crape over the blessed sun if they could;" but between ourselves, Molly, even we Catholics are greatly behind the foreigners on all matters of civilization. I may be out of fear of the others, but really we don't enjoy ourselves at all like the French or the Germans. Even in the little place I'm writing now, there's more amusement than in a big city at home; and if there's anything I'm convinced of it, Molly, it's this, that there is no keeping people out of great wickedness except by employing them in small sins; and let me tell you, there's not a Political Economist that ever I heard of has hit upon the secret.

We are all in good health, and except that K. I. is in one of his habitual moods of discontent and grumbling, there's not anything particular the matter with us. Indeed, if it wasn't for his natural perverseness of disposition, he oughtn't to be cross and disagreeable, for dear James has just been appointed to an elegant situation on what they call the 'Diplomatic Service.' When the letter came first, I was almost off in a faint. I didn't know where it might be they might be sending the poor child, perhaps to Great Cairo, or the Hymeneal Mountains of India; but Lord George says that it's at one of the great Courts of Europe he's sure to be; and, indeed, with his figure and advantages, that's the very thing to suit him. He's a picture of a young man, and the very image of poor Tom M'Carthy, that was shot at Ballyhealey the year of the great frost. If he doesn't make a great match I'm surprised at it; and the young ladies must be mighty different in their notions from what I remember them, besides. Getting him ready and fitting him out has kept us here; for whenever there's a call upon K. I.'s right hand pocket, he buttons up the left at once, so that, till James is fairly off, there's no hope for us of getting away from this. That once done, however, I'm determined

to pass the winter in Italy. As Lord George says, coming abroad and not crossing the Alps, is like going to a dinner-party and getting up after the "roast"—"you have all the solids of the entertainment, but none of the light and elegant trifles that aid digestion, and engage the imagination." It's a beautiful simile, Molly, and very true besides; for, after all, the heart requires more than mere material enjoyments!

You're maybe surprised to hear that Lord G. is back here; and so was I to see him. What his intentions are, I'm unable to say; but it's surely Mary Anne at all events; and as she knows the world well, I'm very easy in my mind about her. As I told K. I. last night—"Abuse the Continent as you like, K. I., waste all your bad words about the cookery, and the morals, and the light wines and women, but there's one thing you can't deny to it—there's no falling in love abroad—that I maintain!" And when you come to think of it, I believe that's the real evil of Ireland. Everybody there falls in love, and the more surely when they haven't a sixpence to marry on! All the young lawyers without briefs—all the young doctors in dispensaries—every marching lieutenant living on his pay—every young curate with seventy pounds a year—in fact, Molly, every case of hopeless poverty—all what the newspapers call heartrending distress—is sure to have a sweetheart! When you think of the misery that it brings on a single family, you may imagine the ruin that it entails on a whole country. And I don't speak in ignorance, Mrs. Gallagher; I've lived to see the misery of even a tincture of love in my own unfortunate fate. Not that indeed I ever went far in my feelings towards K. I., but my youth and inexperience carried me away; and see where they've left me! Now that's an error nobody commits abroad; and as to any one being married according to their inclination, it's quite unheard of; and if they have less love, they have fewer disappointments, and that same is something!

Talking of marriage brings me to Betty—I suppose I mustn't say Betty Cobb, now that she calls herself the Frau Taddy. Hasn't she made a nice business of it! "They're fighting," as K. I. says, "like man and wife, already!" The creature is only half human; and when he has gorged himself with meat and drink, he sometimes sleeps for twenty-four, or maybe thirty hours, and if there's not something ready for him when he wakes up, his passion is dreadful. I'm afraid of my life lest K. I. should see the bill for his food, and told the landlord only to put down his four regular meals, and that I 'd pay the rest, which I have managed to do, up to this, by disposing of K. I.'s wearing apparel. And would you believe it, that the beast has already eaten a brown surtout, two waistcoats, and three pair of kerseymere shorts and gaiters, not to say a spencer that he had for his lunch, and a Mackintosh cape that he took the other night before going to bed! Betty

is always crying from his bad usage, and consequently of no earthly use to any one; but if a word is said against him, she flies out in a rage, and there's no standing her tongue!

Maybe, however, it's all for the best, for without a little excitement to my nervous system, I'd have found this place very dull. Doctor Morgan Moore, that knew the M'Carthy constitution better than any one living, used to say, "Miss Jemima requires movement and animation," and, indeed, I never knew any place agree with me like the "Sheds" of Clontarf.

Mary Anne keeps telling me that this is now quite vulgar, and that your people of first fashion are never pleased with anybody, or anything; and whenever a place, or a party, or even an individual is peculiarly tiresome, she says, "Be sure, then, that it's quite the mode." That is possibly the reason why Lord George recommends us passing a few weeks on the Lake of Comus; and if it's the right thing to do I'm ready and willing; but I own to you, Molly, I'd like a little sociality, if it was only for a change. At any rate Comus is in Italy, and if we once get there it will go far with me if I don't see the Pope. I'm obliged to be brief this time, for the post closes here whenever the postmaster goes to dinner, and to-day I'm told he dines early. I'll write you, however, a full and true account of us all next week, till when believe me your ever affectionate and attached friend,

JEMIMA DODD.

P.S. Mary Anne has just reconciled me to the notion of Comus. It is really the most aristocratic place in Europe, and she remarks that it is exactly the spot to make excellent acquaintances in for the ensuing winter; for you see, Molly, that is really what one requires in summer and autumn, and the English that live much abroad study this point greatly. But, indeed, there's a wonderful deal to be learned before one can say that they know life on the Continent; and the more I think of it the less am I surprised at the mistakes and blunders of our travelling countrymen—errors, I am proud to say, that we have escaped up to this.

## LETTER XIV.

KENNY JAMES DODD TO THOMAS PURCELL, ESQ., OF THE GRANGE, BRUFF.

Bregenz.

MY DEAR TOM,—Although it is improbable I shall be able to despatch this by the post of to-day, I take the opportunity of a few moments of domestic peace to answer your last—I wish I could say agreeable—letter. It is not that your intentions are not everything that consists with rectitude and honour, or that your sentiments are not always those of a right-minded man, but I beg to observe to you, Tom Purcell, in all the candour of a five-and-forty years' friendship, that you have about the same knowledge of life and the world that a toad has of Lord Rosse's telescope.

We have come abroad for an object, which, whether attainable or not, is not now the question; but if there be any prospect whatever of realising it—confound the phrase, but I have no other at hand—it is surely by an ample and liberal style of living, such as shall place us on a footing of equality with the best society, and make the Dodds eligible anywhere.

I suppose you admit that much. I take it for granted that even bucolic dulness is capable of going so far. Well, then, what do you mean by your incessant appeals to "retrenchment" and "economy?" Don't you see that you make yourself just as preposterous as Cobden, when he says, cut down the estimates, reduce the navy, and dismiss your soldiers, but still be a first-rate power. Tie your hands behind your back, but cry out, "Beware of me, for I'm dreadful when I'm angry."

You quote me against myself; you bring up my old letters, like Hansard, against me, and say that all our attempts have been failures; but without calling you to order for referring "to what passed in another place," I will reply to you on your own grounds. If we have failed, it has been because our resources did not admit of our maintaining to the end what we had begun in splendour—that our means fell short of our requirements—that, in fact, with a well chosen position and picked troops, we lost the battle only for want of ammunition, having fired away all our powder in the beginning of the engagement. Whose fault was *that*, I beg to ask? Can the Commissary-General Purcell come clear out of *that* charge?

I know your hair-splitting habit—I at once anticipate your reply. An agent and a commissary are two very different things! And just as flatly I

tell you, you are wrong, and that, rightly considered, the duties of both are precisely analogous, and that a general commanding an army, and an Irish landlord travelling on the Continent, present a vast number of points of similitude and resemblance. In the one case as in the other, supplies are indispensable—come what will, the forces must be fed, and if it would be absurd for the General to halt in his march and inquire into all the difficulties of providing stores, it would be equally preposterous for the landlord to arrest his career by going into every petty grievance of his tenantry, and entering into a minute examination of the state of every cottier on his land. Send the rations, Tom, and I'll answer for the campaign. I don't mean to say that there are not some hardships attendant upon this. I know that to raise contributions an occasional severity must be employed; but is the fate of a great engagement to be jeopardised for the sake of such considerations? No, no, Tom. Even your spirit will recoil from such an admission as this!

It is only fair to mention that these are not merely my own sentiments. Lord George Tiverton, to whom I happened to show your letter, was really shocked at the contents. I don't wish to offend you, Tom, but the expression he used was, "It is fortunate for your friend Purcell that he is not *my* agent." I will not repeat what he said about the management of English landed property, but it is obvious that our system is not their system, and that such a thing as a landlord in *my* position is actually unheard of. "If Ireland were subject to earthquakes," said he, "if the arable land were now and then covered over ten feet deep with lava, I could understand your agent's arguments; but wanting these causes, they are downright riddles to me."

He was most anxious to obtain possession of your letter; and I learned from Mary Anne that he really meant to use it in the House, and show you up bodily as one of the prominent causes of Irish misery. I have saved you from this exposure, but I really cannot spare you some of the strictures your conduct calls for.

I must also observe to you that there is, what the Duke used to call, "a terrible sameness" about your letters. The potatoes are always going to rot, the people always going to leave. It rains for ten weeks at a time, and if you have three fine days you cry out that the country is ruined by drought. Just for sake of a little variety, can't you take a prosperous tone for once, instead of "drawing my attention," as you superciliously phrase it, to the newspaper announcement about "George Davis and other petitioners, and the lands of Ballyclough, Kiltimaon, and Knocknaslattery, being part of the estates of James Kenny Dodd, Esq., of Dodsborough." I have already given you my opinion about that Encumbered Estates Court, and I see no reason for changing it. Confiscation is a mild name for its operation. What Ireland really wanted was a Loan Fund—a good round sum, say three and a half or four millions, lent out on reasonable security, but free from all embar-

rassing conditions. Compel every proprietor to plant so many potatoes for the use of the poor, and get rid of those expensive absurdities called "Unions," with all the lazy, indolent officials; do that, and we might have a chance of prospering once more.

It makes me actually sick to hear you, an Irishman born and bred, repeating all that English balderdash about "a cheap and indisputable title," and so forth. Do you remember about four-and-twenty years ago, Tom, when I wanted to breach a place for a window in part of the old house at Dodsborough, and Hackett warned me that if I touched a stone of it I'd maybe have the whole edifice come tumbling about my ears. Don't you see the analogy between that and our condition as landlords, and that our real security lay in the fact that nobody could dare to breach us? Meddle with us once, and who could tell where the ruin would fall! So long as the system lasted we were safe, Tom. Now, your Encumbered Court, with its Parliamentary title, has upset all that security; and that's the reason of all the distress and misfortune that have overtaken us.

I think, after the specimen of my opinions, I'll hear no more of your reproaches about my "growing indifference to home topics," my "apparent apathy regarding Ireland," and other similar reflections in your last letter. Forget my country, indeed! Does a man ever forget the cantharides when he has a blister on his back. If I'm warm, I'm sorry for it; but it's your own fault, Tom Purcell. You know me since I was a child, and understand my temper well; and whatever it was once, it hasn't improved by conjugal felicity.

And now for the Home Office. James started last night for London, to go through whatever formalities there may be before receiving his appointment. What it is to be, or where, I have not an idea; but I cling to the hope that when they see the lad, and discover his utter ignorance on all subjects, it will be something very humble, and not requiring a sixpence from me. All that I have seen of the world shows me that the higher you look for your children the more they cost you; and for that reason, if I had my choice, I'd rather have him a gauger than in the Grenadier Guards. Even as it is, the outfit for this journey has run away with no small share of your late remittance; and now that we have come to the end of the M'Carthy legacy—the last fifty was "appropriated" by James before starting—it will require all the financial skill you can command to furnish me with sufficient means for our new campaign.

Yes, Tom, we are going to Italy. I have discussed the matter so long, and so fully argued it in every shape, artistical, philosophical, economical, and moral, that I verily believe that our dialogues would furnish a very respectable manual to Trans-Alpine travellers; and if I am not a convert to

the views of my opponents, I am so far vanquished in the controversy as to give in.

Lord George put the matter, I must say, very strongly before me "To turn your steps homeward from the Alps," said he, "is like the act of a man who, having dressed for an evening party, and ascended the stairs, wheels round at the door of the drawing room, and quits the house All your previous knowledge of the Continent, so costly and so difficult to attain, is about, at length, to become profitable, that insight into foreign life and habits, which you have arrived at by study and observation, is now about to be available Italy is essentially the land of taste, elegance, and refinement, and there will all the varied gifts and acquirements of your accomplished family be appreciated" Besides this, Tom, he showed me that the "Snobs," as he politely designated them, are all "Cis Alpine," strictly confining themselves to the Rhine and Switzerland, and never descending the southern slopes of the Alps According to his account, therefore, the climate of Italy is not more marked by superiority than the tone of its society There, all is polished, elegant, and refined, and if the men be "not all brave, and the women all virtuous it is because "their moral standard is one more in accordance with the ancient traditions, the temper, and the instincts of the people I quote you his words here, because very possibly they may be more intelligible to you than to myself At all events, one thing is quite clear—we ought to go and judge for ourselves, and to this resolve have we come Tiverton—without whom we should be actually helpless—has arranged the whole affair, and, really with a regard to economy that, considering his habits and his station, can only be attributed to a downright feeling of friendship for us By a mere accident he hit upon a villa at Como, for a mere trifle—he won't tell me the sum, but he calls it a "nothing"—and now he has, with his habitual good luck, chanced upon a return carriage going to Milan, the driver of which horses our carriage, and takes the servants with him, for very little more than the keep of his beasts on the road This piece of intelligence will tickle every stingy fibre in your economical old heart, and at last shall I know you to mutter "K I is doing the prudent thing"

Tiverton himself says, "It's not exactly the most elegant mode of travelling, but as the season is early, and the Splugen a pass seldom traversed, we shall slip down to Como unobserved, and save some forty or fifty 'Naps,' without any one being the wiser" Mrs D would of course object if she had the faintest suspicion that it was inexpensive, but "my Lord," who seems to read her like a book, has told her that it is the very mode in which all the aristocracy travel, and that by a happy piece of fortune we have secured the vetturino that took Prince Albert to Rome, and the Empress of Russia to Palermo!

He has, or he is to find, four horses for our coach, and three for his own; we are to take the charge of bridges, barriers, rafts, and "remounts," and give him besides five Napoleons per diem, and a "buona mano," or gratuity, of three more, if satisfied, at the end of the journey. Now, nothing could be more economical than this; for we are a large party, and with luggage enough to fill a ship's jolly-boat.

You see, therefore, what it is to have a shrewd and intelligent friend. You and I might have walked the main street of Bregenz till our shoes were thin, before we discovered that the word "Gelegenheit," chalked up on the back-leather of an old calèche, meant "A return conveniency to be had cheap." The word is a German one, and means "Opportunity;" and ah, my dear Tom, into what a strange channel does it entice one's thoughts! What curious reflections come across the mind, as we think of all our real Opportunities in this world, and how little we did of them. Not but there might be a debit side to the account, too, and that some two or three may have escaped us, that it was just as well we let pass!

We intended to have left this to-morrow, but Mrs. D. won't travel on a Friday. "It's an unlucky day," she says, and maybe she's right. If I don't mistake greatly, it was on a Friday I was married, but of course this is a reminiscence I keep to myself. This reminds me of the question in your postscript, and to which I reply: Not a bit of it, nothing of the kind. So far as I see, Tiverton feels a strong attachment to James, but never even notices the girls. I ought to add, that this is not Mrs. D.'s opinion; and she is always flouncing into my dressing-room, with a new discovery of a look that he gave Mary Anne, or a whisper that he dropped into Cary's ear. Mothers would be a grand element in a detective police, if they didn't now and then see more than was in sight; but that's their failing, Tom. The same generous zeal which they employ in magnifying their husbands' faults, helps them to many another exaggeration. Now Mrs. D. is what she calls fully persuaded—in other words, she has some shadowy suspicions—that Lord George has formed a strong attachment to one or other of her daughters, the only doubtful point being which of them is to be "my Lady."

Shall I confess to you, that I rather cherish the notion than seek to disabuse her of it, and for this simple reason: whenever she is in full cry after grandeur, whether in the shape of an acquaintance, and invitation, or a match for the girls, she usually gives me a little peace and quietness. The Peerage, "God bless our old Nobility," acts like an anodyne on her.

I give you, therefore, both sides of the question, repeating once more my own conviction, that Lord G. has no serious intentions, to use the phrase maternal, whatever. And now to your second query: If not, is it prudent to encourage his intimacy? Why, Tom Purcell, just bethink you for a moment, and see to what a strange condition would your theory, if acted on, resolve

all the inhabitants of the globe. Into one or other category they must go infallibly. "Either they want to marry one of the Dodds, or they don't." Now, though the fact is palpable enough, it is for all purposes of action a most embarrassing one, and if I proceed to make use of it, I shall either be doomed to very tiresome acquaintances, or a life of utter solitude and desertion.

Can't a man like your society, your dinners, your port, your jokes, and your cigars, but he must perforce marry one of your daughters? Is your house to be like a rat-trap, and if a fellow puts his head in must he be caught? I don't like the notion at all; and not the less, that it rather throws a slight over certain convivial gifts and agreeable qualities for which, once upon a time at least, I used to have some reputation. As to Tiverton, I like *him*, and I have a notion that he likes *me*. We suit each other as well as it is possible for two men bred, born, and brought up so perfectly unlike. We both have seen a great deal of the world, or rather of two worlds, for *his* is not *mine*. At the same time, every remark he makes—and all his observations show me that mankind is precisely the same thing everywhere, and that it is exactly with the same interests, the same impulses, and the same passions, my Lord bets his thousands at "Crocky's," that Billy Healey, or Father Tom, ventures his half-crown at the Pig and Pincers, in Bruff. I used to think that what with races, elections, horse-fairs, and the like, I had seen my share of rascality or roguery; but, compared to my Lord's experiences, I might be a babe in the nursery. There isn't a dodge—not a piece of knavery that was ever invented—he doesn't know. Trickery and deception of every kind are all familiar to him, and, as he says himself, he only wants a few weeks in a convict settlement to put the finish on his education.

You'd fancy, from what I say, that he must be a cold, misanthropic, suspectful fellow, with an ill-natured temper, and a gloomy view of everybody and everything. Far from it; his whole theory of life is benevolent; and his maxim, to believe every one honourable, trustworthy, and amiable. I see the half-cynical smile with which you listen to this, and I already know the remark that trembles on your lip. You would say, that such a code cuts both ways, and that a man who pronounces so favourably of his fellows almost secures thereby a merciful verdict on himself. In fact, that he who passes base money can scarcely refuse, now and then, to accept a bad halfpenny in change. Well, Tom, I'll not argue the case with you, for if not myself a disciple of this creed, I have learned to think that there are very few indeed who are privileged to play censor upon their acquaintances, and that there is always the chance that when you are occupied looking at your neighbour drifting on a lee shore, you may bump on a rock yourself.

You said in your last that you thought me more lax than I used to be about right and wrong—"less straitlaced," you were polite enough to call it; and with an equal urbanity you ascribed this change in me to the habits of the

Continent. I am proud to say "Guilty" to the charge, and I believe you are right as to the cause. Yes, Tom, the tone of society abroad is eminently merciful, and it must needs be a bad case where there are no attenuating circumstances. So much the worse, say you; where vice is leniently looked on, it will be sure to flourish. To which I answer: Show me where it does not! Is it in the modern Babylon, is it in moral Scotland, or drab-coloured Washington? On my conscience, I don't believe there is more of wickedness in a foreign city than a home one; the essential difference being that we do wrong with a consciousness of our immorality; whereas the foreigner has a strong impression that after all it's only a passing frailty, and that human nature was not ever intended to be perfect. Which system tends most to corrupt a people, and which creates more hopeless sinners, I leave to you, and others as fond of such speculations, to ponder over.

Another charge—for your letter has as many counts as an indictment—another you make against me is, that I seem as if I was beginning to like—or as you modestly phrase it—as if I was getting more reconciled to the Continent. Maybe I am, now that I have learned how to qualify the light wines with a little brandy, and to make my dinner of the eight or nine, instead of the two-and-thirty dishes they serve up to you; and since I have trained myself to walk the length of a street, in rain or sunshine, without my hat, and have attained to the names of the cards at whist in a foreign tongue, I believe I do feel more at home here than at first; but still I am far, very far, in arrear of the knowledge that a man bred and born abroad would possess at my age. To begin, Tom: He would be a perfect cook; you couldn't put a clove of garlic too little, or an olive too much, without his detecting it in the dish. Secondly, he would be curious in snuffs, and a dead hand at dominoes; then he would be deep in the private histories of the ballet, and tell you the various qualities of short-draperied damsels that had figured on the boards for the last thirty years. These, and such-like, would be the consolations of his declining years; and of these I know absolutely next to nothing. Who knows, however, but I may improve? The world is a wonderful schoolmaster, and if Mrs. D. is to be believed, I am an apt scholar whenever the study is of an equivocal kind.

We hope to spend the late autumn at Como, and then step down into some of the cities of the South for the winter months. The approved plan is Florence till about the middle of January, Rome till the beginning of Lent, then Naples till the Holy Week, whence back again for the ceremonies. After that, northward wherever you please. All this sounds like a good deal of locomotion, and consequently of expense, but Lord G. says, "Just leave it to me. I'll be your courier;" and as he not only performs that function, but unites with it that of banker—he can get anything discounted at any moment—I am little disposed to depose him from his office. Now no more complaints

that I have not replied to you about this, that, and t'other, not informed you about our future movements, nor given you any hint as to our plans: you know everything about us, at least so far as it is known to your

Very sincere friend,

KENNY I. DODD.

As I mentioned in the beginning, I am too late for the post, so I'll keep this open if anything should occur to me before the next mail.

The Inn. Splugen, Monday.

I thought this was already far on its way to you; but, to my great surprise, on opening my writing-desk this morning, I discovered it there still. The truth is, I grow more absent, and what the French call "distracted," every day; and it frequently happens that I forget some infernal bill or other, till the fellow knocks at the door with "the notice." Here we are, at a little inn on the very top of the Alps. We arrived yesterday, and, to our utter astonishment, found ourselves suddenly in a land of snow and icebergs. The whole way from Bregenz the season was a mellow autumn: some of the corn was still standing, but most was cut, and the cattle turned out over the stubble; the trees were in full leaf, and the mountain rivulets were clear and sparkling, for no rain had fallen for some time back. It was a picturesque road, and full of interest in many ways. From Coire we made a little excursion across the Rhine to a place called Ragatz—a kind of summer resort for visitors who come to bathe and drink the waters of Pfeffers, one of the most extraordinary sights I ever beheld. These baths are built in a cleft of the mountain, about a thousand feet in depth, and scarcely thirty wide in many parts: the sides of the precipices are straight as a wall, and only admit of a gleam of the sun when perfectly vertical. The gloom and solemnity of the spot, its death-like stillness and shade, even at noonday, are terribly oppressive. Nor is the sadness dispelled by the living objects of the picture. Swiss, Germans, French, and Italians, swathed in flannel dressing-gowns and white dimity cerements, with nightcaps and slippers, steal along the gloomy corridors and the gloomier alleys, pale, careworn, and cadaverous. They come here for health, and their whole conversation is sickness. Now, however consoling it may be to an invalid to find a recipient of his sorrows, the price of listening in turn is a tremendous infliction. Nor is the character of the scene such as would probably suggest agreeable reflections: had it been the portico to the nameless locality itself, it could not possibly be more dreary and sorrow-stricken. Now, whatever virtues the waters possess, is surely antagonised by all this agency of gloom and depression; and except it be as a preparation for leaving the world without regret, this place seems to be marvellously ill adapted for its object. It appears to me, however, that

foreigners run into the greatest extremes in these matters; a sick man must either live in a perpetual Vauxhall of fireworks, music, dancing, dining, and gambling, as at Baden, or be condemned to the worse than penitentiary diet and prison discipline of Pfeffers. Surely there must be some halting-place between the ball-room and the cloister, or some compromise of costume between silk stockings and bare feet! But really, to a thinking, reasonable being, it appears very distressing that you must either dance out of the world to Strauss's music, or hobble miserably out of life to the sound of the falling waters of Pfeffers.

Does it not sound also very oddly to our free-trade notions of malady, that the doctor of these places is appointed by the State; that without his sanction and opinion of your case, you must neither bathe nor drink; that no matter how satisfied you may be with your own physician, nor how little to your liking the Government medico, he has the last word on the subject of your disorder, and without his wand the pool is never to be stirred in your behalf. You don't quite approve of this, Tom—neither do I. The State has no more a right to choose my doctor than to select a wife for me. If there be anything essentially a man's own prerogative, it is his—what shall I call it?—his caprice about his medical adviser. One man likes a grave, sententious, silently disposed fellow, who feels his pulse, shakes his head, takes his fee, and departs, with scarcely more than a muttered monosyllable; another prefers the sympathetic doctor, that goes half-and-half in all his sufferings, lies awake at night thinking of his case, and seems to rest his own hopes of future bliss in life on curing him. As for myself, I lean to the fellow that, no matter what ails me, is sure to make me pass a pleasant half-hour; that has a lively way of laughing down all my unpleasant symptoms, and is certain to have a droll story about a patient that he is just come from. That's the man for my money; and I wish you could tell me where a man gets as good value as for the guinea he gives to one of these. Now, from what I have seen of the Continent, this is an order of which they have no representative. All the professional classes, but more essentially the medical, are taken from an inferior grade in society, neither brought up in intercourse with the polite world, nor ever admitted to it afterwards. The consequence is, that your doctor comes to visit you as your shoemaker to measure you for shoes, and it would be deemed as a great liberty were he to talk of anything but your complaint, as for Crispin to impart his sentiments about Russia or the policy of Louis Napoleon. I don't like the system, and I am convinced it doesn't work well. If I know anything of human nature, too, it is this—that nobody tells the whole truth to his physician *till he can't help it.* No, Tom, it only comes out after a long cross-examination, great patience, and a deal of dodging; and for these you must have no vulgarly-minded, common-place, underbred fellow, but a consummate man of the world, who knows when you are

bamboozling him, and when fencing him off with a sham. He must be able to use all the arts of a priest in the confessional, and an advocate in a trial, with a few more of his own not known to either, to extort your secret from you; and I am sure that a man of vulgar habits and low associations is not the best adapted for this.

I wanted to stop and dine with this lugubrious company. I was curious to see what they ate, and whether their natures attained any social expansion under the genial influences of food and drink; but Mrs. D. wouldn't hear of it. She had detected, she said, an "impudent hussy with black eyes" bestowing suspicious glances at your humble servant. I thought that she was getting out of these fancies—I fondly hoped that a little peace on these subjects would in a degree reconcile me to many of the discomforts of old age; but, alas! the grey hairs and the stiff ankles have come, and no writ of ease against conjugal jealousies. Away we came, fresh and fasting, and as there was nothing to be had at Ragatz, we were obliged to go on to Coire before we got supper; and if you only knew what it is to arrive at one of these foreign inns after the hour of the ordinary meals, you'd confess there was little risk of our committing an excess.

I own to you, Tom, that the excursion scarcely deserved to be called a pleasant one. Fatigue, disappointment, and hunger are but ill antagonised by an outbreak of temper; and Mrs. D. lightened the way homeward by a homily on fidelity that would have made Don Juan appear deserving of being canonised as a saint! I must also observe, that Tiverton's conduct on this occasion was the very reverse of what I expected from him. A shrewd, keen fellow like him could not but know in his heart that Mrs. D.'s suspicions were only nonsense and absurdity; and yet what did he do but play shocked and horrified, agreed completely with every ridiculous notion of my wife, and actually went so far as to appeal to me, as a father, against myself as a profligate. I almost choked with passion; and if it was not that we were under obligations to him about James's business, I'm not certain I should not have thrown him out of the coach. I wish to the saints that the women would take to any other line of suspicion, even for the sake of variety—fancy me an incurable drunkard, a gambler, an uncertificated bankrupt, or a forger. I'm not certain if I would not accept the charge of a transportable felony rather than be regarded as the sworn enemy of youth and virtue, and the snake in the grass to all unprotected females.

From Coire we travelled on to Reichenau, a pretty village at the foot of the Alps, watered by the Rhine, which is there a very inconsiderable stream, and with as little promise of future greatness as any barrister of six years standing you please to mention. There is a neat-looking château, which stands on a small terrace above the river here, not without a certain interest attached to it. It was here that Louis Philippe, then Duke of Orleans,

taught mathematics in the humble capacity of usher to a school. Just fancy that deep politician—the wiliest head in all Europe, with the largest views of statecraft, and the most consummate knowledge of men—instilling angles and triangles into impracticable numskulls, and crossing the Asses' bridge ten times a day with lame and crippled intellects.

It would be curious to know what views of mankind, what studies of life, he made during this period. Such a man was not made to suffer any opportunity, no matter how inconsiderable in itself, to escape him without profiting; and it may be easily believed that in the monarchy of a school he might have meditated over the rule of larger masses.

History can scarcely present greater changes of fortune than those that have befallen that family, which is the more singular, since they have been brought about neither by great talents nor great crimes. The Orleans family was more remarkable for the qualities which shine in the middle ranks of life than either for any towering genius or any unscrupulous ambition. Their strength was essentially in this mediocrity, and it was a momentary forgetfulness of that same stronghold—by the Spanish marriage—that cost the King his throne. The truth was, Tom, that the nation never liked us—they hated England just as they hated it at Cressy, at Blenheim, and at Waterloo, and will hate it, notwithstanding your great Industrial gatherings, to the end of time. They were much dissatisfied with Louis Philippe's policy of an English alliance; they deemed it disadvantageous, costly, and humiliating; but that it should be broken up and destroyed for an object of mere family, for a piece of dynastic ambition, was a gross outrage and affront to the spirit of national pride. It was the sentiment of insulted honour that leagued the followers of the Orleans branch with the Legitimists and the Republicans, and formed that terrible alliance that extended from St. Antoine to the Faubourg St. Germain, and included every one from the peer to the common labourer.

All this prosing about politics will never take us over the Alps; and, indeed, so far as I can see, there is small prospect of that event just now; for it has been snowing smartly all night, with a strong southerly wind, which they say always leaves heavy drifts in different parts of the mountain.

We are cooped up here in a curious, straggling kind of an inn, that gradually dwindles away into a barn, a stable, and a great shed, filled with disabled diligences and smashed old sledges—an incurable asylum for diseased conveyances. The house stands in a cleft of the hills; but from the windows you can see the zig-zag road that ascends for miles in front, and which now is only marked by long poles, already some ten or twelve feet deep in snow. It is snow on every side—on the mountains, on the roofs, on the horses that stand shaking their bells at the door; on the conducteur that drinks his schnaps; on the postilion as he lights his pipe. The thin flakes are actually

plating his whiskers and moustachès, till he looks like one of the "Old Guard," as we see them in a melodrama.

Tiverton, who conducts all our arrangements, has had a row with our vetturino, who says that he never contracted to take us over the mountain in sledges; and as the carriages cannot run on wheels, here we are discussing the question. There have been three stormy debates already, and another is to come off this afternoon; meanwhile, the snow is falling heavily, and whatever chance there was of getting forward yesterday, is now ten times less practicable. The landlord of our inn is to be arbiter I understand; and as he is the proprietor of the sledges we shall have to hire, if defeated, without impugning in any way the character of Alpine justice, you can possibly anticipate the verdict.

A word upon this vetturino system ere I leave it—I hope for ever. It is a perfect nuisance from beginning to end. From the moment you set off with one of these rascals, till the hour you arrive at your journey's end, it is plague, squabble, insolence, and torment. They start at what hour of the morning they please; they halt where they like, and for as long as they like, invariably, too, at the worst wayside inns—away from a town and from all chance of accommodation—since rye-bread and sour wine, with a mess of stewed garlic, will always satisfy *them*. They rarely drive at full five miles the hour, and walk every inch with an ascent of a foot in a hundred yards. If expostulated with by the wretched traveller, they halt in some public place, and appeal to the bystanders in some dialect unknown to you. The result of which is that a ferocious mob surrounds you, and with invectives, insults, and provocative gestures, assail and outrage you, till it please your tormentor to drive on; which you do at length amidst hooting and uproar that even convicted felons would feel ashamed of.

On reaching your inn at night, they either give such a representation of you as gets you denied admittance at all, or obtain for you the enviable privilege of paying for everything "en Milor." Between being a swindler and an idiot the chance alone lies for you. Then they refuse to unstrap your luggage; or if they do so, tie it on again so insecurely that it is sure to drop off next day. I speak not of a running fire of petty annoyances: such as fumigating you with pestilent tobacco, nor the blessed enjoyment of that infernal Spitz dog which stands all day on the roof, and barks every mile of the road from Berne to Naples. As to any redress against their insolence, misconduct, or extortion, it is utterly hopeless—and for this reason: they are sure to have a hundred petty occasions of rendering small services to the smaller authorities of every village they frequent. They carry the Judge's mother for nothing to a watering-place; or they fetch his aunt to the market town; or they smuggle for him—or thieve for him—something that is only to be had over the frontier. Very probably, too, on the very morning of your appeal, you have kicked the

same Judge's brother, he being the waiter of your inn, and having given you bad money in change—at all events, *you* are not likely ever to be met with again; the vetturino is certain to come back within the year; and, finally, you are sure to have money, and be able to pay—so that, as the Irish foreman said, as the reason for awarding heavy damages against an Englishman, "It is a fine thing to bring so much money into the country."

Take my word for it, Tom, the system is a perfect disgust from beginning to end, and even its cheapness only a sham; for your economy is more than counterbalanced by police fees, fines, and impositions, delays, remounts, bulls, and starved donkeys, paid for at a price they would not bring if sold at a market. Post, if you can afford it; take the public conveyances, if you must; but for the sake of all that is decent and respectable—all that consists with comfort and self-respect—avoid the vetturino! I know that a contrary opinion has a certain prevalence in the world—I am quite aware that these rascals have their advocates—and no bad ones either—since they are women. I have witnessed more than one Guiseppe, or Antonio, with a beard, whiskers, and general "get up," that would have passed muster in a comic opera; and on looking at the fellow's book of certificates (for such as these always have a bound volume, smartly enclosed in a neat case), I have found that "Mrs. Miles Dalrymple and daughters made the journey from Milan to Aix les Bains with Francesco Birbante, and found him excessively attentive, civil, and obliging; full of varied information about the road, and quite a treasure to ladies travelling alone." Another of these villains is styled "quite an agreeable companion;" one was called "charming," and I found that Miss Matilda Somers, of Queen's-road, Old Brompton, pronounces Luigi Balderdasci, "although in the humble rank of a vetturino, an accomplished gentleman." I know, therefore, how ineffectual would it be for Kenny Dodd to enter the lists against such odds, and it is only under the seal of secrecy that I dare to mutter them. The widows and the fatherless form a strong category in foreign travel; dark dresses and demure looks are very vagrant in their habits, and I am not going to oppose myself single-handed to such a united force. But to you, Tom Purcell, I may tell the truth in all confidence and security. If I was in authority, I'd shave these scoundrels to-morrow. I'd not suffer a moustache, a red sash, nor a hat with a feather amongst them; and take my word for it, the panegyrics would be toned down, and we'd read much more about the horses than the drivers, and learn how many miles a day they could travel, and not how many sonnets of Petrarch the rascal could repeat.

I have lost my "John Murray." I forgot it in our retreat from Pfeffers; so that I don't remember whether he lauds these fellows or the reverse, but the chances are it is the former. It is one of the endless delusions travellers fall into, and many's the time I have had to endure a tiresome description of their

delightful vetturino, that "charming Beppo, who, 'however he got them,' had a bouquet for each of us every morning at breakfast." If I ever could accomplish the writing of that book I once spoke to you about upon the Continent and foreign travels, I'd devote a whole chapter to these fellows; and more than that, Tom, I'd have an Appendix—a book of travels is nothing without an Appendix in small print—wherein I'd give a list of all these scoundrels who have been convicted as bandits, thieves, and petty larceners; of all their misdeeds against old gentlemen with palsy, and old ladies with "nerves." I'd show them up, not as heroes but highwaymen; and take my word for it, I'd be doing good service to the writers of those sharply-formed little paragraphs now so enthusiastic about Giovanni, and so full of "grateful recollections" of "poor Guiseppe."

I am positively ashamed to say how many of the observations, ay, and of the printed observations of travellers, I have discovered to have their origin in this same class; and that what the tourist jotted down as his own remark on men and manners, was the stereotyped opinion of these illiterate vagabonds. But as for Books of Travel, Tom, of all the humbugs of a humbugging age, there is nothing can approach them. I have heard many men TALK admirably about foreign life and customs. I have never chanced upon one who could WRITE about them. It is not only that your really smart fellows do not write; but, that to pronounce authoritatively on a people, one must have a long and intimate acquaintance with them. Now, this very fact alone, to a great degree, invalidates the freshness of observation; for what we are accustomed to see every day ceases to strike us as worthy of remark. To the raw tourist, all is strange, novel, and surprising; and if he only record what he sees, he will tell much that everybody knows, but also some things that are not quite so familiar to the multitude. Now, your old resident abroad knows the Continent too well, and too thoroughly, to find any one incident or circumstance peculiar. To take an illustration: A man who had never been at a play in his life would form a far better conception of what a theatre was like from hearing the description of one from an intelligent child, who had been there once, than from the most laboured criticism on the acting from an old frequenter of the pit. Hence the majority of these tours have a certain success at home; but for the man who comes abroad, and wishes to know something that may aid to guide his steps, form his opinions, and direct his judgment, believe me, they are not worth a brass farthing There is this also to be taken into account—that every observer is, more or less, recounting some trait of his own nature, of his habits, his tastes, and his prejudices; so that before you can receive his statement, you have to study his disposition. Take all these adverse and difficult conditions into consideration—give a large margin for credulity, and a larger for exaggeration—bethink you of the embarrassments of a foreign tongue, and then I

ask you how much real information you have a right to expect from Journals of the Long Vacation, or "Winters" in Italy, or Tyrol Rambles in autumn? I say it in no boastfulness, Tom, nor in any mood of vanity, but if I was some twenty years younger, with a good income, and no encumbrances, well versed in languages, and fairly placed as regards social advantages, I, myself, could make a very readable volume about foreign life and foreign manners. You laugh at the notion of Kenny Dodd on a title-page; but haven't we one or two of our acquaintances that cut just as ridiculous a figure?

Tiverton has come in to tell me that the judgment of the Court has been given against him, and consequently against us, "*in re* Vetturino;" and the award of the judge is, "That we pay all the expenses for the journey to Milan, the gratuity—that was only to be given as an evidence of our perfect satisfaction—and anything more that our sense of honour and justice may suggest, as compensation for the loss of time he has sustained in litigating with us." On these conditions he is to be free to follow his road, and we are to remain here till—I wish I could say the time—but, according to present appearances, it may be spring before we get away. When I tell you that the decision has been given by the landlord of the inn, where we must stop—as no other exists within twenty miles of us—you may guess the animus of the judgment-seat. It requires a great degree of self-restraint not to be carried into what the law calls an overt act, by a piece of iniquity like this. I have abstained, by a great effort; but the struggle has almost given me a fit of apoplexy. Imagine the effrontery of the rascal, Tom; scarcely had he counted over his Napoleons, and made his grin of farewell, than he mounted his box and drove away over the mountain, which had just been declared impassable —a feat witnessed by all of us—in company with the landlord who had pronounced the verdict against us, I stormed—I swore—in short, I worked myself into a sharp fit of the gout, which flew from my ankle to my stomach, and very nigh carried me off. A day of extreme suffering has been succeeded by one of great depression; and here I am now, with the snow still falling fast; the last courier who went by, saying "that all the inns at Chiavenna were full of people, none of whom would venture to cross the mountain." It appears that there are just two peculiarly unpropitious seasons for the passage —when the snow falls first, and when it begins to melt in spring. It is needless to say that we have hit upon one of these, with our habitual good fortune!

Thursday. The Inn, Splugen.

Here we are still in this blessed place, this being now our seventh day in a hole you wouldn't condemn a dog to live in. How long we might have

continued our sojourn it is hard to say, when a mere accident has afforded us the prospect of liberation. It turns out that two families arrived and went forward last night, having only halted to sup and change horses. On inquiry why we couldn't be supposed capable of the same exertion, you'll not believe me when I tell you the answer we got. No, Tom! The enormous power of lying abroad is clear and clean beyond your conception. It was this, then. We could go when we pleased—it was entirely a caprice of our own that we had not gone before. "How so, may I ask?" said I, in the meekest of inquiring voices. "You wouldn't go like others," was the answer. "In what respect—how?" asked I again. "Oh, your English notions rejected the idea of a sledge. You insisted upon going on wheels, and as no wheeled carriage could run——" Grant me patience, or I'll explode like a shell. My hand shakes, and my temples are throbbing so that I can scarcely write the lines. I made a great effort at a calm and discretionary tone, but it wouldn't do; a certain fulness about the throat, a general dizziness, and a noise like the sea in my ears, told me that I'd have been behaving basely to the "Guardian" and the "Equitable Fire and Life" were I to continue the debate. I sat down, and with a sponge and water and loose cravat, I got better. There was considerable confusion in my faculties on my coming to myself; I had a vague notion of having conducted myself in some most ridiculous and extravagant fashion—having insisted upon the horses being harnessed in some impossible mode, or made some demand or other totally impracticable. Cary, like a dear, kind girl as she is, laughed and quizzed me out of my delusion, and showed me that it was the cursed imputation of that scoundrel of a landlord had given this erratic turn to my thoughts. The gout has settled in my left foot, and I now, with the exception of an occasional shoot of pain that I relieve by a shout, feel much better, and hope soon to be fit for the road. Poor Cary made me laugh by a story she picked up somewhere of a Scotch gentleman who had contracted with his vetturino to be carried from Genoa to Rome and fed on the road—a very common arrangement. The journey was to occupy nine days; but wishing to secure a splendid "buona mano," the vetturino drove at a tremendous pace, and actually arrived in Rome on the eighth day, having almost killed his horses and exhausted himself. When he appeared before his traveller, expecting compliments on his speed, and a handsome recognition for his zeal, guess his astonishment to hear his self-panegyrics cut short by the pithy remark: "You drove very well, my friend; but we are not going to part just yet—you have still another day to *feed* me."

Tiverton has at length patched up an arrangement with our landlord for twelve sledges—each only carries one and the driver—so that if nothing adverse intervene we are to set forth to-morrow. He says that we may

reasonably hope to reach Chiavenna before evening. I'll therefore not detain this longer, but in the prospect that our hour of liberation has at length drawn nigh, conclude my long despatch.

Our villa at Como will be our next address, and I hope to find a letter there from you soon after our arrival. Remember, Tom, all that I have said about the supplies, for though they tell me Italy be cheap, I have not yet discovered a land where the population believes gold to be dross. Adieu!

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## LETTER XV.

### MARY ANNE DODD TO MISS DOOLAN, OF BALLYDOOLAN.

On the Splugen Alps.

Dearest Kitty,—I write these few lines from the Refuge-house on the Splugen Pass. We are seven thousand feet above the level of something, with fifty feet of snow around us, and the deafening roar of avalanches thundering on the ear. We set out yesterday from the village of Splugen, contrary to the advice of the guides, but Papa insisted on going. He declared, that if no other means offered, he'd go on foot, so that opposition was really out of the question. Our departure was quite a picture. First came a long, low sledge, with stones and rocks to explore the way, and show where the footing was secure. Then, came three others with our luggage; after that Mamma, under the guidance of a most careful person, a certain Bernardt something, brother of the man who acted as guide to Napoleon; Cary followed her in another sledge, and I came third, Papa bringing up the rear, for Betty and the other servants were tastefully grouped about the luggage. Several additional sledges followed with spade and shovel-folk, ropes, drags, and other implements most suggestive of peril and adventure. We were perfect frights to look at, for, in addition to fur boots and capes, tarpaulins and hoods, we had to wear snow-goggles as a precaution against the fine drifting snow, so that really for my shame sake I was glad that each sledge only held one, and the driver, who is fortunately, also, at your back.

The first few miles of ascent were really pleasurable, for the snow was hard, and the pace occasionally reached a trot, or at least such a resemblance to one as shook the conveniency, and made the bells jingle agreeably on the harness. The road, too, followed a zig-zag course on the steep side of the mountain, so

that you saw at moments some of those above and some beneath you, winding along exactly like the elephant procession in Bluebeard. The voices sounded cheerily in the sharp morning air, itself exhilarating to a degree, and this, with the bright snow-peaks, rising one behind the other in the distance, and the little village of Splugen in the valley, made up a scene strikingly picturesque and interesting. There was a kind of adventure, too, about it all, dearest Kitty, that never loses its charm for the soul deeply imbued with a sense of the beautiful and the imaginative. I fancied myself at moments carried away by force into the Steppes of Tartary, or that I was Elizabeth crossing the Volga, and I believe I even shed tears at my fancied distress. To another than you, dearest, I might hesitate even if I confessed as much, but you, who know every weakness of a too feeling heart, will forgive me for being what I am.

My guide, a really fine-looking mountaineer, with a magnificent beard, fancied that it was the danger that had appalled me. He hastened to offer his rude but honest consolations; he protested that there was nothing whatever like peril, and that if there were——But why do I go on? even to my dearest friend may not this seem childish? and is it not a silly vanity that owns it can derive pleasure from every homage, even the very humblest?

We gradually lost sight of the little smoked-wreathed village, and reached a wild, but grandly desolate region, with snow on every side. The pathway, too, was now lost to us, and the direction only indicated by long poles at great intervals. That all was not perfectly safe in front might be apprehended, for we came frequently to a dead halt, and then the guides and the shovel-men would pass rapidly to and fro, but, muffled as we were, all inquiry was impossible, so that we were left to the horrors of doubt and dread without a chance of relief. At length we grew accustomed to these interruptions, and felt in a measure tranquil. Not so the guides, however; they frequently talked together in knots, and I could see from their upward glances, too, that they apprehended some change in the weather. Papa had contrived to cut some of the cords with which they had fastened his muffles, and by great patience and exertion succeeded in getting his head out of three horsecloths, with which they had swathed him.

"Are we near the summit?" cried he in English—"how far are we from the top?"

His question was of course unintelligible, but his action not; and the consequence was, that three of our followers rushed over to him, and after a brief struggle, in which two of them were tumbled over in the snow, his head was again enclosed within its woolly cenotaph; and, indeed, but for a violent jerking motion of it, it might have been feared that even all access to external air was denied him. This little incident was the only break to the monotony of the way, till nigh noon, when a cold, biting wind, with great masses of misty

vapour, swept past and around us, and my guide told me that we were somewhere, with a hard name, and that he wished we were somewhere else, with a harder.

I asked why, but my question died away in the folds of my head-gear, and I was left to my own thoughts, when suddenly a loud shout rang through the air. It was a party about to turn back, and the sledges stopped up the road. The halt led to a consultation between the guides, which I could see turned on the question of the weather. The discussion was evidently a warm one, a party being for, and another against it. Hearing what they said was of course out of the question, muffled as I was; but their gestures clearly defined who were in favour of proceeding, and who wished to retrace their steps. One of the former particularly struck me; for, though encumbered with fur boots and an enormous mantle, his action plainly indicated that he was something out of the common. He showed that air of command, too, Kitty, that at once proclaims superiority. His arguments prevailed, and after a considerable time spent, on we went again. I followed the interesting stranger till he was lost to me; but guess my feelings, Kitty, when I heard a voice whisper in my ear, "Don't be afraid, dearest, I watch over *your* safety." Oh! fancy the perturbation of my poor heart, for it was Lord George who spoke. He it was whose urgent persuasions had determined the guides to proceed, and he now had taken the place behind my own sledge, and actually drove instead of the postilion. Can you picture to yourself heroism and devotion like this? And while I imagined that he was borne along with all the appliances of ease and comfort, the poor dear fellow was braving the storm *for me*, and *for me* enduring the perils of the raging

From that instant, my beloved Kitty, I took little note of the dangers around me. I thought but of him who stood so near to me; so near, and yet so far off; so close, and yet so severed! I bethought me, too, how unjust the prejudice of the vulgar mind that attributes to our youthful nobility habits of selfish indolence and effeminate ease. Here was one reared in all the voluptuous enjoyment of a splendid household, trained from his cradle to be waited on and served, and yet was he there wilfully encountering perils and hardships from which the very bravest might recoil. Ah, Kitty! it is impossible to deny it—the highly-born have a native superiority in everything. Their nobility is not a thing of crosses and ribbons, but of blood. They feel that they are of earth's purest clay, and they assert the claim to pre-eminence by their own proud and lofty gifts. I told you, too, that he said "dearest." I might have been deceived; the noise was deafening at the moment; but I feel as if my ears could not have betrayed me. At all events, Kitty, his hand sought mine while he spoke, and though in his confusion it was my elbow he caught, he pressed it tenderly. In what a delicious dream did I revel as we

slid along over the snow. What cared I for the swooping wind, the thundering avalanche, the drifting snow-wreath—was he not there, my protector and my guide? Had he not sworn to be my succour and my safety? We had just arrived at a lofty table-land—some few peaks appeared still above us, but none very near—when the wind, with a violence beyond all description, bore great masses of drift against us, and effectually barred all further progress. The stone sledge, too, had partly become embedded in the soft snow, and the horse was standing powerless, when suddenly Mamma's horse stumbled and fell. In his efforts to rise he smashed one of the rope traces, so that when he began to pull again, the unequal draught carried the sledge to one side, and upset it. A loud shriek told me something had happened, and at the instant Lord G. whispered in my ear, "It's nothing—she has only taken a 'header' in the soft snow, and won't be a bit the worse."

Further questioning was vain; for Cary's sledge-horse shied at the confusion in front, and plunged off the road into the deep snow, where he disappeared all but the head, fortunately flinging her out into the guide's arms. My turn was now to come; for Lord G., with his mad impetuosity, tried to pass on and gain the front, but the animal, by a furious jerk, smashed all the tackle, and set off at a wild, half-swimming pace through the snow, leaving our sledge firmly wedged between two dense walls of drift. Papa sprang out to our rescue; but so helpless was he, from the quantity of his integuments, that he rolled over, and lay there on his back, shouting fearfully.

It appeared as if the violence of the storm had only waited for this moment of general disaster; for now the wind tore along great masses of snow, that rose around us to the height of several feet, covering up the horses to their backs, and embedding the men to their armpits. Loud booming masses announced the fall of avalanches near, and the sky became darkened, like as if night was approaching. Words cannot convey the faintest conception of that scene of terror, dismay, and confusion. Guides shouting and swearing; cries of distress, and screams of anguish, mingled with the rattling thunder and the whistling wind. Some were for trying to go back; others proclaimed it impossible; each instant a new disaster occurred. The baggage had disappeared altogether, Betty Cobb being saved, as it sank, by almost superhuman efforts of the guide. Paddy Byrne, who had mistaken the kick of a horse on the back of his head for a blow, had pitched into one of the guides, and they were now fighting in four feet of snow, and likely to carry their quarrel out of the world with them. Taddy was "nowhere." To add to this uproar, Papa had, in mistake for brandy, drunk two-thirds of a bottle of complexion wash, and screamed out that he was poisoned. Of Mamma I could see nothing, but a dense group surrounded her sledge, and showed me she was in trouble.

I could not give you an idea of what followed, for incidents of peril were

every moment interrupted by something ludicrous. The very efforts we made to disengage ourselves were constantly attended by some absurd catastrophe, and no one could stir a step without either a fall, or a plunge up to the waist in soft snow. The horses, too, would make no efforts to rise, but lay to be snowed over as if perfectly indifferent to their fate. By good fortune our britschka, from which the wheels had been taken off, was in a sledge to the rear, and Mamma, Cary, and myself, were crammed into this, to which all the horses, and men also, were speedily harnessed, and by astonishing efforts we were enabled to get on. Papa and Betty were wedged fast into one sledge, and attached to us by a tow-rope, and thus we at length proceeded.

When Mamma found herself in comparative safety, she went off into a slight attack of her nerves; but fortunately Lord G. found out the bottle Papa had been in vain in search of, and she got soon better. Poor fellow, no persuasion could prevail on him to come inside along with us. How he travelled, or how he contrived to brave that fearful day, I never learned! From this moment our journey was at the rate of about a mile in three hours, the shovel and spade men having to clear the way as we went; and what between horses that had to be dug out of holes, harness repaired, men rescued, and frequent accident to Papa's sledge, which on an average was upset every half-hour, our halts were incessant. It was after midnight that we reached a dreary-looking stone edifice in the midst of the snow. Anything so dismal I never beheld, as it stood there surrounded with drift-snow, its narrow windows strongly barred with iron, and its roof covered with heavy masses of stone to prevent it being carried away by the hurricane. This, we were told, was the Refuge-house on the summit, and here, we were informed, we should stay till a change of weather might enable us to proceed.

But does not the very name "Refuge-house" fill you with thoughts of appalling danger? Do you not instinctively shudder at the perils to which this is the haven of succour?

"I see we are not the first here," cried Caroline; "don't you see lights moving yonder?"

She was right, for as we drew up we perceived a group of guides and drivers in the doorway, and saw various conveyances and sledges within the shed at the side of the building.

A dialogue in the wildest shouts was now conducted between our party and the others, by which we came to learn that the travellers were some of those who had left Splugen the night before ourselves, and whose disasters had been even worse than our own. Indeed, as far as I could ascertain, they had gone through much more than we had.

Our first meeting with Papa—in the kitchen, as I suppose I must call the

lower room of this fearful place—was quite affecting, for he had taken so much of the guide's brandy as an antidote to the supposed poison, that he was really overcome, and, under the delusion that he was at home in his own house, ran about shaking hands with every one, and welcoming them to Dodsborough. Mamma was so convinced that he had lost his reason permanently, that she was taken with violent hysterics. The scene baffles all description, occurring as it did in presence of some twenty guides and spade-folk, who drank their "schnaps," eat their sausages, smoked, and dried their wet garments all the while, with a most well-bred inattention to our sufferings. Though Cary and I were obliged to do everything ourselves—for Betty was insensible, owing to her having travelled in the vicinity of the same little cordial flask, and my maid was sulky in not being put under the care of a certain good-looking guide—we really succeeded wonderfully, and contrived to have Papa put to bed in a little chamber with a good mattress, and where a cheerful fire was soon lighted. Mamma also rallied, and Lord George made her a cup of tea in a kettle, and poured her out a cup of it into the shaving dish of his dressing-box, and we all became as happy as possible.

It appeared that the other arrivals, who occupied a separate quarter, were not ill provided for the emergency, for a servant used to pass and repass to their chamber with a very savoury odour from the dish he carried, and Lord G. swore that he heard the pop of a champagne cork. We made great efforts to ascertain who they were, but without success. All we could learn was that it was a gentleman and a lady, with their two servants, travelling in their own carriage, which was unmistakably English.

"I'm determined to run them to earth," exclaimed Lord G. at last. "I'll just mistake my way, and blunder into their apartment."

We endeavoured to dissuade him, but he was determined, and when he is so, Kitty, nothing can swerve him. Off he went, and after a pause of a few seconds we heard a heavy door slammed, then another. After that, both Cary and myself were fully persuaded that we heard a hearty burst of laughter; but though we listened long and painfully, we could detect no more. Unhappily, too, at this time Mamma fell asleep, and her deep respirations effectually masked everything but the din of the avalanches. After a while Cary followed Ma's example, leaving me alone to sit by the "watch-fire's light," and here, in the regions of eternal snow, to commune with her who holds my heart's dearest affections.

It is now nigh three o'clock. The night is of the very blackest, neither moon nor stars to be seen; fearful squalls of wind—gusts strong enough to shake this stronghold to its foundation—tear wildly past, and from the distance comes the booming sound of thundering avalanches. One might fancy, easily, that escape from this was impossible, and that to be cast away here implied a lingering but inevitable fate. No great strain of fancy is needed

for such a consummation. We are miles from all human habitation, and three yards beyond the doorway the boldest would not dare to venture! And you, Kitty, at this hour are calmly sleeping to the hum of "the spreading sycamore;" or, perchance, awake, and thinking of her who now pours out her heart before you; and oh, blame me not if it be a tangled web that I present to you, for such will human hopes and emotions ever make it. My poor heart is indeed a battle-ground for warring hopes and fears, high-soaring ambitions, and depressing terrors. Would that you were here to guide, console, and direct me!

Lord George has not returned. What can his absence mean? All is silent, too, in the dreary building. My anxieties are fearful—I dread I know not what. I fancy a thousand ills that even possibility would have rejected The courier is to pass this at five o'clock, so that I must perchance close my letter in the same agony of doubt and uncertainty.

Oh, dearest, only fancy the *mal à propos*. Who do you think our neighbours are? Mr. and Mrs. Gore Hampton, on their way to Italy! Can you imagine anything so unfortunate and so distressing? You may remember all our former intimacy—I may call it friendship—and by what an unpropitious incident it was broken up. Lord George has just come to tell me the tidings, but, instead of participating in my distress, he seems to think the affair an admirable joke. I need not tell you that he knows nothing of Mamma's temper, nor her manner of acting. What may come of this there is no saying. It seems that there is scarcely a chance of our being able to get on to-day; and here we are all beneath one roof, our mutual passions of jealousy, hatred, revenge, and malice, all snowed up on the top of the Splugen Alps!

I have asked of Lord George, almost with tears, what is to be done? but to all seeming he sees no difficulty in the matter, for his reply is always, "Nothing whatever." When pressed closely, he says, "Oh, the Gore Hamptons are such thoroughly well-bred folk, there is never any awkwardness to be apprehended from *them*. Be quite easy in your mind, *they* have tact enough for any emergency." What this may mean, Kitty, I cannot even guess; for the "situation," as the French would call it, is peculiar. And as to tact, it is, after all, like skill in a game which, however available against a clever adversary, is of little value when opposed to those who neither recognise the rules, nor appreciate the nice points of the encounter.

But I cannot venture to inquire further; it would at once convict me of ignorance, so that I appear to be satisfied with an explanation that explains nothing. And now, Kitty, to conclude, for, though dying to tell you that this knotty question has been fairly solved, I must seal my letter and despatch it by Lord George, who is this moment abont to set out for the Toll-house, three miles away. It appears that two of our guides have refused to go

farther, and that we must have recourse to the authorities to compel them. This is the object of Lord George's mission; but the dear fellow braves every hardship and every peril for us, and says that he would willingly encounter far more hazardous dangers for one "kind word, or one kind look," from your distracted, but ever devoted,

MARY ANNE.

They begin to fear now that some accident must have befallen the courier with the mails; he should have passed through here at midnight. It is now daybreak, and no sign of him! Our anxieties are terrible, and what fate may yet be ours there is no knowing.

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## LETTER XVI.

MRS. DODD TO MRS. MARY GALLAGHER, PRIEST'S HOUSE, BRUFF.

Colico, Italy.

MY DEAR MOLLY,—After fatigues and distresses that would have worn out the strength of a rhinocerass, here we are at length in Italy. If you only saw the places we came through, the mountains upon mountains of snow, the great masses that tumbled down on every side of us, and we lost, as one might call it, in the very midst of eternal dissolution, you'd naturally exclaim that you had got the last lines ever to be traced by your friend Jemima. Two days of this, no less, my dear, with fifteen degrees below "Nero," wherever he is, that's what I call suffering and misery. We were twice given up for lost, and but for Providence and a guide called—I am afraid to write it, but it answers to Barny with us—we'd have soon gone to our long account; and, oh, Molly! what a reckoning will that be for K. I. If ever there was a heart jet black with iniquity and baseness, it is his; and he knows it; and he knows I knows it; and more than that, the whole world shall know it. I'll publish him through what the Poet calls the "infamy of space;" and, so long as I'm spared, I'll be a sting in his flesh, and a thorn in his side.

I can't go over our journey—the very thought of it goes far with me—but if you can imagine three females along with the Arctic voyagers, you may form some vague idea of our perils. Bitter winds, piercing snow-drift, pelting showers of powdered ice, starvation, and danger—dreadful danger—them was the enjoyments that cost us something over eighteen pounds! Why?—

you naturally say—why? And well may you ask, Mrs. Gallagher. It is nothing remarkable in your saying that this is singular and almost unintelligible. The answer, however, is easy, and the thing itself no mystery. It's as old as Adam, my dear, and will last as long as his family. The natural baseness and depravity of the human heart! Oh, Molly, what a subject that is! I'm never weary thinking of it: and, strange to say, the more you reflect the more difficult does it become. Father Shea had an elegant remark that I often think over: "Our bad qualities," says he, "are like noxious reptiles. There's no good trying to destroy them, for they're too numerous; nor to reclaim them, for they're too savage; the best thing is to get out of their way." There's a deal of fine philosophy in the observation, Molly; and if, instead of irritating, and vexing, and worrying our infirmities, we just treated them the way we should a shark or a rattlesnake, depend upon it we'd preserve our unanimity undisturbed, and be happier as well as better. Maybe you'll ask why I don't try this plan with K. I.? But I did, Molly. I did so for fifteen years. I went on never minding his perfidious behaviour; I winked at his frailties, and shut my eyes, as you know yourself, to Shusy Connor; but my leniency only made him bolder in wickedness, till at last we came to that elegant business, last summer, in Germany, that got into all the newspapers, and made us the talk of the whole world.

I thought the lesson he got at that time taught him something. I fondly dreamed that the shame and disgrace would be of service to him; at all events, that it would take the conceit out of him. Vain hopes, Molly dear—vain and foolish hopes! He isn't a bit better; the bad dross is in him; and my silent tears does no more good than my gentle remonstrances.

It was only the other day we went to see a place called Pfeffers, a dirty, dismal hole as ever you looked at. I thought we were going to see a beautiful something like Ems or Baden, with a band and a pump-room, and fine company, and the rest of it. Nothing of the kind—but a gloomy old building in a cleft between two mountains, that looked as if they were going to swallow it up. The people, too, were just fit for the place—a miserable set of sickly creatures in flannel dresses, either sitting up to their necks in water, or drying themselves on the rocks. To any one else the scene would be full of serious reflections about the uncertainty of human life, and the certainty of what was to come after it. Them wasn't K. I.'s sentiments, my dear, for he begins at once what naval men call "exchanging signals" with one of the patients. "This is the Bad-house, my dear," says he. "I think so, Mr. D.," said I, with a look that made him tremble. He had just ordered dinner, but I didn't care for that; I told them to bring out the horses at once. "Come, girls," said I, "this is no place for you; your father's proceedings are neither very edifying nor exemplary."

"What's the matter now," says he. "Where are we going before dinner?"

"Out of this, Mr. Dodd," said I. "Out of this, at any rate."

"Where to—what for?" cried he.

"I think you might guess," said I, with a sneer; "but if not, perhaps that hussy with the spotted gingham could aid you to the explanation."

He was so overwhelmed at my discovering this, Molly, that he was speechless: not a word—not a syllable could he utter. He sat down on a stone, and wiped his head with a handkerchief.

"Don't make me ill, Mrs. D.," said he, at last. "I've a notion that the gout is threatening me."

"If that's all, K. I.," said I, "it's well for you—it's well if it is not worse than the gout. Ay, get red in the face—be as passionate as you please, but you shall hear the truth from *me*, at least; I mayn't be long here to tell it. Sufferings such as I've gone through will do their work at last; but I'll fulfil my duty to my family till I'm released——" With that I gave it to him, till we arrived at Coire, eighteen miles, and a good part of it up hill, and you may think what that was. At all events, Molly, he didn't come off with flying colours, for when we reached a place called Splugen he was seized with the gout in earnest. I only wish you saw the hole he pitched upon to be laid up in; but it's like everything else the man does. Every trait of his character shows that he hasn't a thought, nor a notion, but about his own comforts and his own enjoyments. And I told him so. I said to him, "Don't think that your self-indulgence and indolence go down with *me* for easiness of temper: that's an imposture may do very well for the *world*, but your wife can't be taken in by it." In a word, Molly, I didn't spare him, and, as his attack was a sharp one, I think it's likely he doesn't look back to the Splugen with any very grateful reminiscences.

Little, I thought, all the time, what good cause I had for my complaints, nor what was in store for me in the very middle of the snow! You must know that we had to take the wheels off the carriage and put it on something like a pair of big skates, for the snow was mountains high, and as soft as an egg-pudding. You may think what floundering we had through it for twelve hours, sometimes sinking up to the chin, now swimming, now digging, and now again being dragged out of it by ropes, till we came to what they call the "Refuge-house;" a pretty refuge, indeed, with no door, and scarcely a window, and everybody—guides, postboys, diggers, and travellers—all hickledy-pickledy inside! There we were, my dear, without a bed, or even a mattress, and nothing to eat but a bottle of Sir Robert Peel's sauce, that K. I. had in his trunk, with a case of eau-de-Cologne to wash it down. Fortunately for me my feelings got the better of me, and I sobbed and screeched

myself to rest. When I awoke in the morning I heard from Mary Anne that another family, and English too, were in the Refuge with us, and to all appearance not ill-supplied with the necessaries of life. This much I perceived myself, for the courier lit a big fire on the hearth, and laid a little table beside it, as neat and comfortable as could be. After that he brought out a coffee-pot and boiled the coffee, and made a plate of toast, and fried a dish of ham-rashers and eggs. The very fizzing of them on the fire, Molly, nearly overcame me! But that wasn't all, but he put down on the table a case of sardines and a glass bowl of beautiful honey, just as if he wanted to make my suffering unbearable. It was all I could do to stand it. At last, when he had everything ready, he went to a door at the end of the room and knocked. Something was said inside that I didn't catch, but he answered quickly, "Oui, Madame," and a minute after out they walked. Oh, Molly! there's not words in the language to express even half of my feelings at that moment. Indeed, for a minute or two I wouldn't credit my senses, but thought it was an optical confusion. In she flounced, my dear, just as if she was walking into the Court at St. James's, with one arm within his, and the other hand gracefully holding up her dress, and *he*, with a glass stuck in his eye, gave us a look as he passed just as if we were the people of the place.

Down they sat in all state, smiling at each other, and settling their napkins as coolly as if they were at the Clarendon. "Will you try a rasher, my dear?" "Thanks, love; I'll trouble you." It was "love" and "dear" every word with them, and such looks as passed, Molly, I am ashamed even to think of it! Heaven knows I never looked that way at K. I. There I sat watching them; for worlds I couldn't take my eyes away; and though Mary Anne whispered and implored, and even tried to force me, I was chained to the spot. To be sure, it's little they minded me! They talked away about Lady Sarah This and Sir Joseph That; wondered if the Marquis had gone down to Scotland, and whether the Duchess would meet them at Milan. As I told you before, Molly, I wasn't quite sure my eyes didn't betray me, and while I was thus struggling with my doubts, in came K. I. "I was over the whole place, Jemi," said he, "and there's not a scrap of victuals to be had for love or money. They say, however, that there's an English family——" When he got that far, he stopped short, for his eyes just fell on the pair at breakfast.

"Ma, I never, Mrs. D.," said he, "but that's our friend Mrs. G. H. As sure as I'm here, that's herself and no other."

"And of course quite a surprise to *you*," said I, with a look, Molly, that went through him.

"Faith, I suppose so," said he, trying to laugh. "I wasn't exactly think-

ing of her at this moment. At all events, the meeting is fortunate; for one might die of hunger here."

I needn't tell you, Molly, that I'd rather endure the trials of Tartary than I'd touch a morsel belonging to her; but before I could say so, up he goes to the table, bowing, and smiling, and smirking, in a way that I'm sure he thought quite irresistible. She, however, never looked up from her teacup, but her companion stuck his glass in his eye, and stared impudently without speaking.

"If I'm not greatly mistaken," said K. I., "I have the honour and the happiness to see before me——"

"Mistake—quite a mistake, my good man. Au! au!" said the other, cutting him short. "Never saw you before in my life!"

"Nor are *you*, Sir, the object of my recognition. It is this lady—Mrs. Gore Hampton."

She lifted her head at this, and stared at K. I. as coldly as if he was a wax image in a hairdresser's window.

"Don't you remember me, Ma'am?" says he, in a soft voice; "or must I tell you my name?"

"I'm afraid even that, Sir, would not suffice," said she, with a most insulting smile of compassion.

"Ain't you Mrs. Gore Hampton, Ma'am?" asked he, trembling all over between passion and astonishment.

"Pray, do send him away, Augustus," said she, sipping her tea.

"Don't you perceive, Sir—eh, au—don't ye see—that it's a au—au, eh—a misconception—a kind of a demned blunder?"

"I tell you what I see, Sir," said K. I.—"I see a lady that travelled day and night in my company, and with no other companion, too, for two hundred and seventy miles. That lived in the same hotel, dined at the same table, and, what's more——"

But I couldn't bear it any longer, Molly. Human nature is not strong enough for trials like this—to hear him boasting before my face of his base behaviour, and to see her sitting coolly by listening to it. I gave a screech that made the house ring, and went off in the strongest fit of screaming ever I took in my life. I tore my cap to tatters, and pulled down my hair—and, indeed, if what they say be true, my sufferings must have been dreadful; for I didn't leave a bit of whisker on one of the guides, and held another by the cheek till he was nigh insensible. I was four hours coming to myself; but many of the others weren't in a much better state when it was all over. The girls were completely overcome, and K. I. taken with spasms, that drew him up like a football. Meanwhile, *she* and her friend were off; never till the last minute as much as saying one word to any of us;

but going away, as I may say, with colours flying, and all the "horrors of war."

Oh, Molly, wasn't that more than mere human fragility is required to bear, not to speak of the starvation and misery in my weak state? Black bread and onions, that was our dinner, washed down with the sourest vinegar, called wine forsooth, I ever tasted. And that's the way we crossed the Alps, my dear, and them the pleasures that accompanied us into the beautiful South.

If I wanted a proof of K. I.'s misconduct, Molly, wasn't this scene decisive? Where would be the motive of her behaviour, if it wasn't conscious guilt? That was the ground I took in discussing the subject as we came along; and a more lamentable spectacle of confounded iniquity than he exhibited I never beheld. To be sure, I didn't spare him much, and jibed him on the ingratitude his devotion met with, till he grew nearly purple with passion.

"Mrs. D.," said he at last, ' when we lived at home, in Ireland, we had our quarrels like other people, about the expense of the house, and waste in the kitchen, the time the horses was kept out under the rain, and such-like —but it never occurred to you to fancy me a gay Lutherian. What the —— has put that in your head now? Is it coming abroad? for, if so, that's another grudge I owe this infernal excursion!"

"You've just guessed it, Mr. Dodd, then," said I. "When you were at home in your own place, you were content, like the other old fools of your own time of life, with a knowing glance of the eye, a sly look, and maybe a passing word or two, to a pretty girl; but no sooner did you put foot on foreign ground, than you fancied yourself a lady-killer! You never saw how absurd you were, though I was telling it to you day and night. You wouldn't believe how the whole world was laughing at you, though I said so to the girls."

I improved on this theme till we came at nightfall to the foot of the Alps, and by that time—take my word for it, Mrs. Gallagher—there wasn't much more to be said on the subject.

New troubles awaited us here, Molly. I wonder will they ever end? You may remember that I told you how the wheels was taken off our carriage to put it on a sledge on account of the snow. Well, my dear, what do you think the creatures did, but they sent our wheels over the Great St. Bernardt —I think they call it—and when we arrived here we found ourselves on the hard road without any wheels to the coach, but sitting with the axles in the mud! I only ask you where's the temper can stand that? and worse, too, for K. I. sat down on a stone to look at us, and laughed till the tears run down his wicked old cheeks and made him look downright horrid.

"May I never!" said he, "but I'd come the whole way from Ireland for

one hearty laugh like this. It's the only thing I've yet met that requites me for coming! If I live fifty years I'll never forget it."

I perceive that I haven't space for the reply I made him, so that I must leave you to fill it up for yourself, and believe me your

Ever attached and suffering

JEMIMA DODD.

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## LETTER XVII.

JAMES DODD TO LORD GEORGE TIVERTON, M.P., POSTE RESTANTE, BREGENZ.

Hotel of All Nations, Baths of Homburg.

MY DEAR TIVERTON,—You often said I was a fellow to make a spoon or spoil a—something which I have forgotten—and I begin to fancy that you were a better prophet than that fellow in *Bell's Life*, who always predicts the horse that does *not* win the Oaks. When we parted a few days ago, my mind was resolutely bent on becoming another Metternich or Palmerston. I imagined a whole life of brilliant diplomatic successes, and thought of myself receiving the freedom of the City of London, dining with the Queen, and making "very pretty running" for the peerage. What will you say, then, when I tell you that I despise the highest honours of the entire career, and wouldn't take the seals of the Foreign Office, if pressed on my acceptance this minute.

To save myself from even the momentary accusation of madness, I'll give you—and in as few words as I can—my explanation. As I have just said, I set out with my head full of Ambassadorial ambitions, and jogged along towards England, scarcely noticing the road or speaking to my fellow-travellers. On arriving at Frankfort, however, I saw nothing on all sides of me but announcements and advertisements of the baths of Homburg—"The last week of the season, and the most brilliant of all." Gorgeous descriptions of the voluptuous delights of the place—lists of distinguished visitors, and spicy bits of scandal—alternated with anecdotes of those who had "broke the bank," and were buying up all the châteaux and parks in the neighbourhood. I tried to laugh at these pictorial puffs; I did my best to treat them as mere humbugs; but it wouldn't do. I went to bed so full of them, that I dreamed all night of the play-table, and fancied myself once again the terror of croupiers, and the admired of the fashionable circle in the *salon*. To crown all, a waiter called me, to say that the carriage I had ordered for the baths

was at the door. I attempted to undeceive him; but even there my effort was a failure: and, convinced that there was a fate in the matter, I jumped out of bed, dressed, and set off, firmly impressed with the notion that I was not a free agent, but actually impelled and driven by destiny to go and win my millions at Homburg.

Perhaps my ardour was somewhat cooled down by the aspect of the place. It has few of the advantages nature has so lavishly bestowed on Baden, and which really impart to that delightful resort a charm that totally disarms you of all distrust, and make you forget that you are in a land of "legs" and swindlers, and that every second man you meet is a rogue or a runaway. Now, Homburg does not, as the French say, "impose" in this way. You see at once that it is a "Hell," and that the only amusement is to ruin or be ruined.

"No matter," thought I; "I have already graduated at the green table; I have taken my degree in arts at Baden, and am no young hand fresh from Oxford and new to the Continent; I'll just go down and try my luck—as a fisherman whips a stream. If they rise to my fly—well; if not, pack up the traps, and try some other water." You know that my capital was not a strong one—about a hundred and thirty in cash, and a bill on Drummond for a hundred more—and with this, the Governor had "cleared me out" for at least six months to come. I was, therefore, obliged to "come it small," and merely dabbled away with a few "Naps.," which, by dint of extraordinary patience and intense application, I succeeded in accumulating to the gross total of sixty. As I foresaw that I couldn't loiter above a day longer, I went down in the evening to experimentalise on this fund; and, after a few hours, rose a winner of thirty-two thousand odd hundred francs. The following morning, I more than doubled this; and, in the evening, won a trifle of twenty thousand francs; when, seeing the game take a capricious turn, I left off, and went to supper.

I was an utter stranger in the place; had not even a passing acquaintance with any one; so that, although dying for a little companionship, I had nothing for it but to order my roast partridge in my own apartment, and hob-nob with myself. It is true I was in capital spirits—I had made glorious running, and no mistake—and I drank my health, and returned thanks for the toast with an eloquence that really astonished me. Egad, I think the waiter must have thought me mad, as he heard me hip, hipping, with "one cheer more" to the sentiment.

I suppose I must have felt called on to sing; for sing I did, and, I am afraid, with far more zeal than musical talent; for I overheard a tittering of voices outside my door, and could plainly perceive that the household had assembled as audience. What cared I for this? The world had gone too well with me of late to make me thin-skinned or peevishly disposed. I could

afford to be forgiving and generous; and I revelled in the very thought that I was soaring in an atmosphere to which trifling and petty annoyances never ascended In this enviable frame of mind was I, when a waiter presented himself with a most obsequious bow, and, in a voice of submissive civility, implored me to moderate my musical transports, since the lady who occupied the adjoining apartment was suffering terribly from headache.

"Certainly; of course," was my reply at once; and as he was leaving the room—just by way of having something to say—I asked, "Is she young, waiter?"

"Young and beautiful, sir."

"An angel—eh?"

"Quite handsome enough to be one, sir, I'm certain."

"And her name?"

"The Countess de St. Auber, widow of the celebrated Count de St. Auber, of whom Monsieur must have read in the newspapers."

But Monsieur had not read of him, and was therefore obliged to ask further information; whence it appeared that the Count had accidentally shot himself on the morning of his marriage, when drawing the charge of his pistols, preparatory to putting them in his carriage. The waiter grew quite pathetic in his description of the young bride's agonies, and had to wipe his eyes once or twice during his narrative

"But she has rallied by this, hasn't she?" asked I.

"If Monsieur can call it so," said he, shrugging his shoulders. "She never goes into the world—knows no one—receives no one—lives entirely to herself; and, except her daily ride in the wood, appears to take no pleasure whatever in life."

"And so she rides out every day?"

"Every day, and at the same hour, too. The carriage takes her about a league into the forest, far beyond where the usual promenade extends, and there her horses meet her, and she rides till dusk. Often it is even night ere she returns."

There was something that interested me deeply in all this. You know that a pretty woman on horseback is one of my greatest weaknesses; and so I went on weaving thoughts and fancies about the charming young widow till the champagne was finished, after which I went off to bed, intending to dream of her, but, to my intense disgust, to sleep like a sea-calf till morning.

My first care on waking, however, was to despatch a very humble apology by the waiter for my noisy conduct on the previous evening, and a very sincere hope that the Countess had not suffered on account of it.

He brought me back for answer "that the Countess thanked me for my polite inquiry, and was completely restored."

"Able to ride out as usual?"

"Yes, sir."

"How do you know that?"

"She has just given orders for the carriage, sir."

"I say, waiter, what kind of a hack can be got here? Or, stay, is there such a thing as a good-looking saddle-horse to be sold in the place?"

"There are two at Lagrange's stables, Sir, this moment. Prince Guiciatelli has left them and his groom to pay about thirty thousand francs he owes here."

In less than a quarter of an hour I was dressed and at the stables. The nags were a neat pair; the groom, an English fellow, had just brought them over. He had bought them at Anderson's, and paid close upon three hundred for the two. It was evident that they were "too much," as horses, for the Prince, for he had never backed either of them. Before I left I had bought them both for six thousand francs, and taken "Bob" himself, a very pretty specimen of the short-legged, red-whiskered tribe, into my service.

This was on the very morning, mark, when I should have presented myself before the Dons of Downing-street, and been admitted a something into her Majesty's service!

"I wish they may catch me at red-tapery!" thought I, as I shortened my stirrups, and sat down firmly in the saddle. "I'm much more at home here than perched on an office-stool in that pleasant den they call the 'Nursery' at the Foreign Office."

Guided by a groom, with a led horse beside him, I took the road to the forest, and soon afterwards passed a dark-green barouche, with a lady in it, closely veiled, and evidently avoiding observation. The wood is intersected by alleys, so that I found it easy, while diverging from the carriage-road, to keep the equipage within view, and after about half an hour's sharp canter, I saw the carriage stop, and the Countess descend from it.

Even *you* admit that I am a sharp critic about all that pertains to riding gear; and that as to a woman's hat, collar, gloves, habit, and whip, I am a first-rate opinion. Now, in the present instance, everything was perfect. There was a dash of "costume" in the long drooping feather and the snow-white gauntlets, but then all was strictly toned down to extreme simplicity and quiet elegance. I had just time to notice this much, and catch a glimpse of such a pair of dark eyes! when she was in the saddle at once. I only want to see a woman gather up her reins in her hand, shake her habit back with a careless toss of her foot, and square herself well in the saddle, to say, "That is a horsewoman!" Egad, George, her every gesture and movement were admirable, and the graceful bend forwards with which she struck out into a canter was actually captivating. I stood watching her till she disappeared in the wood, perfectly entranced. I own to you I could not understand a Frenchwoman sitting her horse in this fashion. I had always



believed the accomplishment to be more or less English, and I felt ashamed at the narrow prejudice into which I had fallen.

"What an unlucky fellow that same Count must have been!" thought I; and with this reflection I spurred my nag into a sharp pace, hoping that fast motion might enable me to turn my thoughts into some other channel. It was to no use. Go how I would, or where I would, I could think of nothing but the pretty widow—whither she might be travelling—where she intended to stop—whether alone, or with others of her family—her probable age—her fortune?—all would rise up before me, to trouble my curiosity or awaken my interest.

I was deep in my speculations, when suddenly a horse bounded past me by a cross path. I had barely time to see the flutter of a habit, when it was lost to view. I waited to see her groom follow, but he did not appear. I listened, but no sound of a horse could be heard approaching. Had her horse run away? Had her servant lost trace of her? were questions that immediately occurred to me; but there was nothing to suggest the answer, or dispel the doubt. I could bear my anxiety no longer, and away I dashed after her. It was not till after a quarter of an hour that I came in sight of her, and then she was skimming along over the even turf at a very slapping pace, which, however, I quickly perceived was no run-away gallop.

This fact proclaimed itself in a most unmistakable manner, for she suddenly drew up, and wheeled about, pointing at the same time to the ground, where her whip had just fallen. I dashed up, and dismounted, when, in a voice tremulous with agitation, and with a face suffused in blushes, she begged my pardon for her gesture; she believed it was her groom who was following her, and had never noticed his absence before. I cannot repeat her words, but in accent, manner, tone, and utterance, I never heard the like of them before. What would I have given at that moment, George, for your glib facility of French! Hang me if I would not have paid down a thousand pounds to have been able to rattle out even some of those trashy commonplaces I have seen you scatter with such effect in the *coulisses* of the Opera! It was all of no avail. "Where there's a will there's a way," says the adage; but it's a sorry maxim where a foreign language is concerned. All the volition in the world won't supply irregular verbs; and the most go-ahead resolution will never help one to genders.

I did of course mutter all that I could think of; and, default of elocution, I made my eyes do duty for my tongue, and with tolerable success, too, as her blush betrayed. I derived one advantage, too, from my imperfect French, which is worth recording—I was perfectly obdurate as to anything she might have replied in opposition to my wishes, and notwithstanding all her scruples to the contrary, persisted in accompanying her back to the town.

If I was delighted with her horsemanship, I was positively enchanted with her conversation; for, the first little novelty of our situation over, she talked away with a frank innocence and artless ease which quite fascinated me. She was, in fact, the very realisation of that high-bred manner you have so often told me of as characterising the best French society. How I wished I could have prolonged that charming ride. I'm not quite sure that she didn't detect me in a purpose mistake of the road, that cost us an additional mile or two; if she did, she was gracious enough to pardon the offence without even showing any consciousness of it. Short as the road was, George, it left me irretrievably in love. I know you'll not stand any raptures about beauty, but this much I must and will say, that she is incomparably handsomer than that Sicilian Princess you raved about at Ems, and in the same style, too, brunette, but with a dash of colour in the cheek, a faint pink, that gives a sparkling brilliancy to the rich warmth of the southern tint. Besides this—and let me remark, it *is* something—*my* Countess is not two-and-twenty at most. Indeed, but for the story of the widowhood, I should guess her as something above nineteen.

There's a piece of fortune for you! and all—every bit of it—of my own achieving, too! No extraneous aid in the shape of friends, or introductory letters. "Alone I did it," as the fellow says in the play. Now, I do think a man might be pardoned a little boastfulness for such a victory, and I freely own I esteem Jem Dodd a sharper fellow than I ever believed him.

Perhaps you suspect all this while that I am going too fast, and that I have taken a casual success for a regular victory. If so, you're all wrong, my boy. She has struck her flag already, and acknowledged that your humble servant has effected a change in her sentiments that but a few short weeks before she would have pronounced impossible. The truth is, George, "the Tipperary tactics" that win battles in India, are just as successful in love. Make no dispositions for a general engagement, never trouble your head about cavalry supports, reserves, or the like, but "just go in and win." It is a mighty short "General Order," and cannot possibly be misapprehended. The Countess herself has acknowledged to me, full half a dozen times within the last fortnight, that she was quite unprepared for such warfare. She expected, doubtless, that I'd follow the old rubric, with opera-boxes, bouquets, "marrons glacés," and so on, for a month or two. Nothing of the kind, George. It frankly told her that she was the most beautiful creature in Europe withou knowing it. That it would be little short of a sacrilege she should pass her life in solitude and sorrow, and ten times worse than sacrilege to marry anything but an Irishman. That in all other countries the men are either money-getting, ambitious, or selfish, but that Paddy turns his whole thoughts towards fun and enjoyment. That Napier's Peninsular War and Moore's Melodies might be referred to for evidence of our national tastes: and, in

short, such a people for fighting and making love was never recorded in history. She laughed at me for the whole of the first week, grew more serious the second, and now, within the last three days, instead of calling me "Monsieur le Sauvage," "Cosaque Anglais," and so on, she gravely asks my advice about everything, and never ventures on a step without my counsel and approbation. I have been candid with you hitherto, Tiverton, and so I must frankly own, that, profiting by the adage that says "stratagem is equally legitimate in love as in war," I have indulged slightly in the strategy of mystification. For instance, I have represented the Governor as a great don in his own country, with immense estates, and an ancient title, that he does not assume in consequence of some old act of attainder against the family. My mother I have made a Princess in her own right; and here I am on safer ground, for, if called into court, she'll sustain me in every assertion. Of my own self and prospects I have spoken meekly enough, merely hinting that I dislike diplomacy, and would rather live with the woman of my choice in some comparatively less distinguished station, upon a pittance of—say—three or four thousand a year!

This latter assumption, I must observe to you, is the only one ever disputed between us, and many a debate have we had on the subject. She sees, as everybody sees here, that I spend money lavishly, that not only I indulge in everything costly, but that I outbid even the Russians whenever anything is offered for sale; and at this moment my rooms are filled with pictures, china, carved ivory, stained glass, and other such lumber, that I only bought for the *éclat* of the purchase. If you only heard her innocent remonstrances to me about my extravagance, her anxious appeals as to what "le Prince," as she calls my father, will say to all this wastefulness!

It's a great trial to me sometimes not to laugh at all this, and, indeed, if I didn't know in my heart that I'll make her the very best of husbands, I'd be even ashamed of my deceit; but it's only a pious fraud after all, and the good result will more than atone for the roguery.

I have hinted at our marriage, you see, and I may add that it is all but decided on. There is, however, a difficulty which must be got over first. She was betrothed when a child to a young Neapolitan Prince of the blood—a brother, I take it, of the present king. This ceremony was overlooked on her first marriage, and had her husband lived, very serious consequences—but of what kind I don't know—might have resulted. Now, before contracting a second union, we must get a dispensation of some sort from the Pope, which I fear will take time, although she says that her uncle, the cardinal, will do his utmost to expedite it.

Indeed, I may mention incidentally that she is a great favourite with his Eminence, and *we* hope to be his heirs! Egad, George, I almost fancy myself "punting" his Eminence's gold pieces at hazard, with his signet-ring on

my finger! What a house I'll keep, old fellow; what a stable! what a cellar—and such cigars! Meanwhile, I look to you to aid and abet me in various ways. The Countess, like all foreigners of real rank, knows our Peerage and Nobility off by heart; and she constantly asks me if I know the Marquis of this, and the Duchess of that, and I'm sorely put to, to show cause why I'm not intimate with them all.

Now, my dear Tiverton, can't you somehow give me the Shibboleth amongst these high priests of Fashion, and get me into the Tabernacle, if only for a season. I used myself to know some of the swells of London life when I was at Baden, but, to be sure, I lost a deal of money to them at "creps" and "lansquenet" as the price of the intimacy; and when "*I* shut up," so did *they* too. You, I'm sure, however, will hit upon some expedient to gain me at least acceptance and recognition for a week or two. I only want the outward signs of acquaintanceship, mark you, for I honestly own that all I ever saw during my brief intimacy with these fellows gave me anything but a high "taste of their quality."

I'll enclose you the list of the distinguished company now here, and you'll pick out any to whom you can present me. Another, and not a less important service, I also look to at your hands, which is, to break all this to the Governor, to whom I'm half ashamed to write myself. In the first place, a recent event, of which I may speak more fully to you hereafter, may have made the old gent somewhat suspectful; and secondly, he'll be fraptious about my not going over to England; although, I'll take my oath, if he wants it, that I'd pitch up the appointment to-morrow, if I had it. At the best, I don't suppose they'd make me more than a Secretary of Legation; and *that* perhaps, at the Hague, or Stuttgard, or some other confounded capital of fog and flunkeydom; and I needn't say your friend Jem is not going to "enter for such stakes."

"You'd like to know our plans; and so far as I can make out, we're not to marry till we reach Italy. At Milan, probably, the dispensation will reach us, and the ceremony will be performed by the Arch B. himself. This she insists upon; for about church matters and dignitaries she stickles to a degree that I'd laugh at if I dare; and that I intend to do later on, when I can *dare* with impunity.

Except this, and a most inordinate amount of prudery, she hasn't a fault on earth. Her reserve is, however, awful; and I almost spoiled everything t'other evening by venturing to kiss her hand before she drew her glove on. By Jove, didn't she give me a lecture! If any one had only overheard her, I'm not sure they wouldn't have thought me a lucky fellow to get off with transportation for life! As it was, I had to enter into heavy recognisances for the future, and was even threatened with having Mademoiselle Pauline,

her maid, present at all our subsequent meetings! The very menace made me half crazy!

After all, the fault is on the right side; and I suppose the day will come when I shall deem it the very reverse of a failing. You will be curious to know something about her fortune, but not a whit more so than I am. That her means are ample—even splendid—her style of living evidences. The whole "premier" of a fashionable hotel, four saddle-horses, two carriages, and a tribe of servants, are a strong security for a well-filled purse; but more than that I can ascertain nothing.

As for myself, my supplies will only carry me through a very short campaign, so that I am driven of necessity to hasten matters as much as possible. Now, my dear Tiverton, you know my whole story; and I beg you to lose no time in giving me your very best and shrewdest counsels. Put me up to everything you can think of about settlements, and so forth; and tell me if marrying a foreigner in any way affects my nationality. In brief, turn the thing over in your mind in all manner of ways, and let me have the result.

She is confoundedly particular about knowing that my family approve of the match; and though I have represented myself as being perfectly independent of them on the score of fortune—which, so far as not expecting a shilling from them, is strictly true—I shall probably be obliged to obtain something in the shape of a formal consent and paternal benediction; in which case I reckon implicitly on you to negotiate the matter.

I have been just interrupted by the arrival of a packet from Paris. It is a necklace and some other trumpery I had sent for to "Le Roux." She is in ecstasy with it, but cannot conceal her terror at my extravagance. The twenty thousand francs it cost are a cheap price for the remark the present elicited. "My miserable 'rente' of a hundred thousand francs," said she, "will be nothing to a man of such wasteful habits." So, then, we have four thousand a year certain, George; and, as times go, one might do worse.

I have no time for more, as we are going to ride out Write to me at once, like a good fellow, and give all your spare thoughts to the fortunes of your ever attached friend,

James Dodd.

Address me Lucerne, for *she* means to remove from this at once—the gossips having already taken an interest in us more flattering than agreeable. I shall expect a letter from you at the Post-office.

## LETTER XVIII.

MISS MARY ANNE DODD TO THOMAS PURCELL, ESQ., OF THE GRANGE, BRUFF.

Villa Della Fontana, Lake of Como

My dear Mr. Purcell,—Poor Papa has been so ill since his arrival in Italy, that he could not reply to either of your two last letters, and even now is compelled to employ me as his amanuensis. A misfortune having occurred to our carriage, we were obliged to stop at a small village called Colico, which, as the name implies, was remarkably unhealthy. Here the gout, that had been hovering over him for some days previous, seized him with great violence; no medical aid could be obtained nearer than Milan, a distance of forty miles, and you may imagine the anxiety and terror we all suffered during the interval between despatching the messenger and the arrival of the doctor. As it was, we did not succeed in securing the person we had sent for, he having been that morning sentenced to the galleys, for having in his possession some weapon—a surgical instrument, I believe—that was longer, or sharper, than the law permits; but Doctor Pantuccio came in his stead, and we have every reason to be satisfied with his skill and kindness. He bled Papa very largely on Monday, twice on Tuesday, and intends repeating it again to-day, if the strength of the patient allow of it. The debility resulting from all this is, naturally, very great; but Papa is able to dictate to me a few particulars in reply to your last. First, as to Crowther's bill of costs: he says, "that he certainly cannot pay it at present," nor does he think he ever will. I do not know how much of this you are to tell Mr. C., but you will be guided by your own discretion in that, as on any other point, wherein I may be doubtful. Harris also must wait for his money—and be thankful when he gets it.

You will make no abatement to Healey, but try and get the farm out of his hands, by any means, before he sublets it and runs away to America. Tom Dunne's house, at the cross-roads, had better be repaired; and if a proper representation was made to the Castle about the disturbed state of the country, Papa thinks it might be made a police-station, and probably bring twenty pounds a year. He does not like to let Dodsborough for a "Union;" he says, it's time enough when we go back there to make it a poor-house. As to Paul Davis, he says, "let him foreclose, if he likes; for there are three

other claims before his, and he'll only burn his fingers"—whatever that means.

Papa will give nothing to the school-house till he goes back and examines the children himself; but you are to continue his subscription to the dispensary, for he thinks over-population is the real ruin of Ireland. I don't exactly understand what he says about allowance for improvements, and he is not in a state to torment him with questions; but it appears to me that you are not to allow anything to anybody till some Bill passes, or does not pass, and after that it is to be arranged differently. I am afraid poor Papa's head was wandering here, for he mumbled something about somebody being on a "raft at sea," and hoped he wouldn't go adrift, and I don't know what besides.

Your post-bill arrived quite safe; but the sum is totally insufficient, and below what he expected. I am sure, if you knew how much irritation it cost him, you would take measures to make a more suitable remittance. I think, on the whole, till Papa is perfectly recovered, it would be better to avoid any irritating or unpleasant topics; and if you would talk encouragingly of home prospects, and send him money frequently, it would greatly contribute to his restoration.

I may add, on Mamma's part and my own, the assurance of our being ready to submit to any privation, or even misery if necessary, to bring Papa's affairs into a healthier condition. Mamma will consent to anything but living in Ireland, which, indeed, I think is more than could be expected from her. As it is, we keep no carriage here, nor have any equipage whatever; our table is simply two courses, and some fruit. We are wearing out all our old-fashioned clothes, and see nobody. If you can suggest any additional mode of economising, Mamma begs you will favour us with a line; meanwhile, she desires me to say, that any allusion to "returning to Dodsborough," or any plan "for living abroad as we lived at home," will only embitter the intercourse, which, to be satisfactory, should be free from any irritation between us.

Of course, for the present, you will write to Mamma, as Papa is far from being fit for any communication on matters of business, nor does the doctor anticipate his being able for such, for some weeks to come. We have not heard from James since he left this, but are anxiously expecting a letter by every post, and even to see his name in the *Gazette*. Cary does not forget that she was always your favourite, and desires me to send her very kindest remembrances, with which I beg you to accept those of very truly yours,

Mary Anne Dodd.

P.S.—As it is quite uncertain when Papa will be equal to any exertion,

Mamma thinks it would be advisable to make your remittances, for some time, payable to her name.

The doctor of the dispensary has witten to Papa, asking his support at some approaching contest for some situation—I believe under the Poor-law. Will you kindly explain the reasons for which his letter has remained unreplied to? and if Papa should not be able to answer, perhaps you could take upon yourself to give him the assistance he desires, as I know Pa always esteemed him a very competent person, and kind to the poor. Of course the suggestion is only thrown out for your own consideration, and in strict confidence besides, for I make it a point never to interfere with any of the small details of Pa's property.

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## LETTER XIX.

MRS. DODD TO MRS. MARY GALLAGHER, DODSBOROUGH.

My dear Molly,—I received your letter in due course, and if it wasn't for crying, I could have laughed heartily over it! I don't know I'm sure where you got your elegant description of the Lake of Comus; but I am obliged to tell you it's very unlike the real article; at all events, there's one thing I'm sure of--it's a very different matter living here like Queen Caroline, and being shut up in the same house with K. I.; and therefore no more balderdash about my "queenly existence," and so on, that your last was full of.

Here we are, in what they call the Villa of the Fountains, as if there wasn't water enough before the door but they must have it spouting up out of a creature's nose in one corner, another blowing it out of a shell, and three naked figures—females, Molly—dancing in a pond of it in the garden, that kept me out of the place till I had them covered with an old mackintosh of K. I.'s. We have forty-seven rooms, and there's barely furniture, if it was all put together, for four; and there's a theatre, and a billiard-room, and a chapel; but there's not a chair wouldn't give you the lumbago, and the stocks at Bruff is pleasant compared to the grand sofa. The lake comes round three sides of the house, and a mountain shuts in the other one, for there's no road whatever to it. You think I'm not in earnest, but it's as true as I'm here; the only approach is by water, so that everything has to come in boats. Of course, as long as the weather keeps fine, we'll manage to send into the town; but when there comes—what we're sure to have in this

season—equinoctial gales, I don't know what's to become of us. The natives of the place don't care, for they can live on figs and olives, and those great big green pumpkins they call water-melons; but, after K. I.'s experience, I don't think we'll try *them*. It was at a little place on the way here, called Colico, that he insisted on having a slice of one of these steeped in rum for his supper, because he saw a creature eating it outside the door. Well, my dear, he relished it so much that he ate two, and—you know the man—wouldn't stop till he finished a whole melon as big as one of the big stones over the gate piers at home.

"Jem," says he, when he'd done, "is this the place the hand-book says you shouldn't eat any fruit in, or taste the wines of the country?"

"I don't see that," said I, "but Murray says it's notorious for March miasma, which is most fatal in the fall of the year."

"What's the name of it?" said he.

I couldn't say the word before he gave a screech out of him that made the house ring.

"I'm a dead man," says he; "that's the very place I was warned about."

From that minute the pains began, and he spent the whole night in torture. Lord George, the kindest creature that ever breathed, got out of his bed and set off to Milan for a doctor, but it was late in the afternoon when he got back. Half an hour later, Molly, and it would have been past saving him. As it was, he bled him as if he was veal, for that's the new system, my dear, and it's the blood that does us all the harm, and works all the wickedness we suffer from. If it's true, K. I. will get up an altered man, for I don't think a horse could bear what he's gone through. Even now he's as gentle as an infant, Molly, and you wouldn't know his voice if you heard it. We only go in one at a time to him, except Cary, that never leaves him, and, indeed, he wouldn't let her quit the room. Sometimes I fancy that he'll never be the same again, and from a remark or two of the doctor's, I suspect it's his head they're afraid of. If it wasn't English he raved in, I'd be dreadfully ashamed of the things he says, and the way he talks of the family.

As it is, he makes cruel mistakes, for he took Lord George the other night for James, and began talking to him and warning him against his Lordship. "Don't trust him too far, Jemmy," said he. "If he wasn't in disgrace with his equals, he'd never condescend to keep company with us. Depend on't, boy, he's not 'all right,' and I wish we were well rid of him."

Lord George tried to make him believe that he didn't understand him, and said something about the Parliament being prorogued, but K. I. went on: "I suppose, then, our noble friend didn't get his Bill through the Lords?"

"His mind is quite astray to-night," said Lord George in a whisper, and made a sign for us to creep quietly away, and leave him to Caroline. She understands him best of any of us; and, indeed, one sees her to more advan-

tage when there's trouble and misery in the house, than when we're all well and prosperous.

We came here for economy, because K. I. determined we should go somewhere that money couldn't be spent in. Now, as there is no road, we cannot have horses; and as there are no shops, we cannot make purchases; but, except for the name of the thing, Molly, mightn't we as well be at Bruff? I wouldn't say so to one of the family, but to you, in confidence between ourselves, I own freely I never spent a more dismal three weeks at Dodsborough. Betty Cobb and myself spend our time crying over it the livelong day. Poor creature, she has her own troubles, too! That dirty spalpeen she married ran away with all her earnings, and even her clothes; and Mary Anne's maid says that he has two other wives in his own country. She's made a nice fool of herself, and she sees it now.

How long we're to stay here in this misery, I can't guess, and K. I.'s convalescence may be, the doctor thinks, a matter of months; and even then, Molly, who knows in what state he'll come out of it! Nobody can tell if we won't be obliged to take what they call a Confession of Lunacy against him, and make him allow that he's mad and unfit to manage his affairs. If it was the will of Providence, I'd just as soon be a widow at once; for, after all, it's uncertainty that tries the spirits and destroys the constitution worse than any other affliction!

Indeed, till yesterday afternoon, we all thought he was going off in a placid sleep; but he opened one eye a little, and bade Cary draw the window-curtain, that he might look out. He stared for a while at the water coming up to the steps of the door, and almost entirely round the house, and he gave a little smile. "What's he thinking of?" said I, in a whisper; but he heard me at once, and said, "I'll tell you, Jemi, what it was. I was thinking this was an elegant place against the bailiffs." From that minute I saw that the raving had left him, and he was quite himself again.

Now, my dear Molly, you have a true account of the life we lead, and don't you pity us? If your heart does not bleed for me this minute, I don't know you. Write to me soon, and send me the Limerick papers, that has all the news about the Exhibition in Dublin. By all accounts it's doing wonderfully well, and I often wish I could see it. Cary has just come down to take her half-hour's walk on the terrace—for K. I. makes her do that every evening, though he never thinks of any of the rest of us—and I must go and take her place; so I write myself,

Yours in haste, but in sorrow,

JEMIMA DODD.

## LETTER XX.

MISS MARY ANNE DODD TO MISS DOOLAN, OF BALLYDOOLAN.

Villa della Fontana, Como.

Forget thee! No, dearest Kitty. But how could such cruel words have ever escaped your pen? To cease to retain you in memory would be to avow an oblivion of childhood's joys, and of my youth's fondest recollections; of those first expansions of the heart, when, "fold after fold to the fainting air," the petals of my young existence opened one by one before you; when my shadowy fancies grew into bright realities, and the dream-world assumed all the lights, and, alas! all the shadows of the actual. The fact was, dearest, Papa was very, very ill; I may, indeed, say so dangerously, that at one time our greatest fears were excited for his state; nor was it till within a few days back that I could really throw off all apprehension and revel in that security enjoyed by the others. He is now up for some hours every day, and able to take light sustenance, and even to participate a little in social intercourse, which, of course, we are most careful to moderate, with every regard to his weak state; but his convalescence makes progress ever hour, and already he begins to talk and laugh, and look somewhat like himself.

So confused is my poor head, and so disturbed by late anxieties, that I quite forget if I have written to you since our arrival here; at all events, I will venture on the risk of repetition so far, and say that we are living in a beautiful villa, in a promontory of the Lake of Como. It was the property of the Prince Belgiasso, who is now in exile from his share in the late struggle for Italian independence, and who, in addition to banishment, is obliged to pay above a million of livres—about forty thousand pounds—to the Austrian Government. Lord George, who knew him intimately in his prosperity, arranged to take the villa for us; and it is confessedly one of the handsomest on the whole lake. Imagine, Kitty, a splendid marble façade, with a Doric portico, so close to the water's edge that the whole stands reflected in the crystal flood; an Alpine mountain at the back; while around and above us the orange and the fig, the vine, the olive, the wild cactus, and the cedar, wave their rich foliage, and load the soft air with perfume. It is not alone that Nature unfolds a scene of gorgeous richness and beauty before us; that earth, sky, and water show forth their most beautiful of forms

and colouring; but there is, as it were, an atmosphere of voluptuous enjoyment, an inward sense of ecstatic delight that I never knew nor felt in the colder lands of the north. The very names have a magic in their melody—the song of the passing gondolier—the star-like lamp of the "pescatore," as night steals over the water—the skimming lateen sail—all breathe of Italy; glorious, delightful, divine Italy! land of song, of poetry, and of love!

Oh, how my dearest Kitty would enjoy those delicious nights upon the terrace, where, watching the falling stars, or listening to the far-off sounds of sweet music, we sit for hours long, scarcely speaking! How responsively would her heart beat to the plash of the lake against her rocky seat! and how would her gentle spirit drink in every soothing influence of that fair and beauteous scene! With Lord George it is a passion; and I scarcely know him to be the same being that he was on the other side of the Alps. Young men of fashion in England assume a certain impassive, cold, apathetic air, as though nothing could move them to any sentiment of surprise, admiration, or curiosity, about anything; and when, by an accident, these emotions are excited, the very utmost expression in which their feelings find vent is some piece of town slang—the turf, the mess-room, the universities, and, I believe, even the House of Commons, are the great nurseries of this valuable gift, and as Lord George has graduated in each of these schools, I take it he was no mean proficient. But how different was the real metal that lay buried under the lacquer of conventionality! Why, dearest Kitty, he is the very soul of passion; the wildest, most enthusiastic of creatures; he worships Byron—he adores Shelley. He has told me the whole story of his childhood—one of the most beautiful romances I ever listened to. He passed his youth at Oxford, vacillating between the wildest dissipations and the most brilliant triumphs. After that he went into the Hussars, and then entered the House, moving the Address, as it is called, at one-and-twenty; a career exactly like the great Mr. Pitt's, only that Lord G. really possesses a range of accomplishments, and a vast variety of gifts, to which the Minister could lay no claim. Amidst all these revelations, poured forth with a frank and almost reckless impetuosity, it was still strange, Kitty, that he never even alluded to the one great and turning misfortune of his life. He did, at one time, seem approaching it; I thought it was actually on his lips; but he only heaved a deep sigh, and said, "There is yet another episode to tell you—the darkest, the saddest of all—but I cannot do it now." I thought he might have heard my heart beating, as he uttered these words; but he was too deeply buried in his own grief. At last he broke the silence that ensued, by pressing my hand fervently to his lips, and saying, "But when the time comes for this, it will also bring the hour for laying myself and my fortunes at your feet—for calling you by the dearest of all names—for——" Only fancy, Kitty—it was just as he got this far, that Cary, who really has not a single particle of

delicacy in such cases, came up to ask me where she could find some lemons to make a drink for Papa! I know I shall never forgive her—I feel that I never can—for her heartless interruption. What really aggravates her conduct too, was the kind of apology she subsequently made to me in my own room. Just imagine her saying,

"I was certain it would be a perfect boon to you to get away from that tiresome creature."

If you only saw him, Kitty! if you only heard him! But all I said was:

"There is certainly the merit of a discovery in your remark, Cary; for I fancy you are the first who has found out Lord George Tiverton to be tiresome!"

"I only meant," said she, "that his eternal egotism grows wearisome at last, and that the most interesting person in the world would benefit by occasionally discussing something besides himself."

"Captain Morris, for instance," said I, sharply.

"Even so," said she, laughing; "only I half suspect the theme is one he'll not touch upon!" And with this she left the room.

The fact is, Kitty, jealousy of Lord George's rank, his high station, and his aristocratic connexions, are the real secret of her animosity to him. She feels and sees how small "her poor Captain" appears beside him, and, of course, the reflection is anything but agreeable. Yet I am sure she might know that I would do everything in my power to diminish the width of that gulf between them, and that I would study to reconcile the discrepancies and assuage the differences of their so very dissimilar stations. She may, it is true, place this beyond my power to effect; but the fault in that case will be purely and solely her own.

You do me no more than justice, Kitty, in saying that you are sure I will feel happy at anything which can conduce to the welfare of Doctor B.; and I unite with you in wishing him every success his new career can bestow. Not but, dearest, I must say that, judging from the knowledge I now possess of life and the world, I should augur more favourably of his prospects had he still remained in that quiet obscurity for which his talents and habits best adapt him, than adventure upon the more ambitious, but perilous, career he has just embarked in. You tell me, that having gone up to Dublin to thank one of his patrons at the late election, he was invited to a dinner, where he made the acquaintance of the Earl of Darewood; and that the noble Lord, now Ambassador at Constantinople, was so struck with his capacity, knowledge, and great modesty, that he made him at once an offer of the post of Physician to the Embassy, which, with equal promptitude, was accepted.

Very flatteringly as this reads, dearest, it is the very climax of improbability; and I have the very strongest conviction that the whole appointment is wholly and solely due to the secret influence of Lord George Tiverton, who

is the Earl's nephew. In the first place, Kitty, supposing that the great Earl and the small Dispensary Doctor did really meet at the same dinner-table—an incident just as unlikely as need be conceived—how many and what opportunities would there exist for that degree of intercourse of which you speak?

If the noble Lord did speak at all to the Doctor, it would have been in a passing remark, an easily answered question as to the sanitary state of his neighbourhood, or a chance allusion to the march of the cholera in the north of Europe—so at least Lord G. says; and, moreover, that if the Doctor did, by any accident, evidence any of the qualities for which you give him credit, save the modesty, that the Earl would have just as certainly turned away from him, as a very forward, presuming person, quite forgetful of his station, and where he was then standing. You can perceive from this that I have read the paragraph in yours to Lord G.; but I have done more, Kitty; I have positively taxed him with having obtained the appointment in consequence of a chance allusion I had made to Dr. B. a few weeks ago. He denies it, dearest; but how? He says, "Oh, my worthy uncle never reads *my* letters; he'd throw them aside after a line or two; he's angry with me, besides, for not going into the 'line,' as they call Diplomacy, and would scarcely do me a favour if I pressed him ever so much."

When urged further, he only laughed, and lighting his cigar, puffed away for a moment or two; after which he said, in his careless way: "After all, it mightn't have been a bad dodge of me to send the Doctor off to Turkey. He was an old admirer, wasn't he?"

After this, Kitty, to allude to the subject was impossible, and here I had to leave it. But who could possibly have insinuated such a scandal concerning me? or how could it have occurred to malignant ingenuity to couple my name with that of a person in his station? I cried the entire evening in my own room as I thought over the disgrace to which the bare allusion exposed me.

Is there not a fatality, then, I ask you, in everything that ties us to Ireland? Are not the chance references to that country full of low and unhappy associations? and yet you can talk to me of "when we come back again."

We are daily becoming more uneasy about James. He is now several weeks gone, and not a line has reached us to say where he is, or what success has attended him. I know his high-spirited nature so well, and how any reverse or disappointment would inevitably drive him to the wildest excesses, that I am in agony about him. A letter in your brother's hand is now here awaiting him, so that I can perceive that even Robert is as ignorant of his fate as we are.

All these cares, dearest, will have doubtless thrown their shadows over

this dreary epistle, the reflex of my darkened spirit. Bear with and pity me, dearest Kitty; and even when calmer reason refuses to follow the more headlong impulses of my feeling, still care for, still love

Your ever heart-attached and devoted
MARY ANNE DODD.

P.S.—The post has just arrived, bringing a letter for Lord G. in James's hand. It was addressed Bregenz, and has been several days on the road. How I long to learn its tidings; but I cannot detain this, so again good-by.

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## LETTER XXI.

KENNY JAMES DODD TO THOMAS PURCELL, ESQ., OF THE GRANGE, BRUFF.

Lake of Como.

MY DEAR TOM,—Though I begin this to-day, it may be it will take me to the end of the week to finish it, for I am still very weak, and my ideas come sometimes too quick and sometimes too slow, and, like an ill-ordered procession, stop the road, and make confusion everywhere. Mary Anne has told you how I have been ill, and for both our sakes I'll say little more about it. One remark, however, I will make, and it is this: that of all the good qualities we ascribe to home, there is one unquestionably pre-eminent—"it is the very best place to be sick in." The monotony and sameness so wearisome in health are boons to the sick man. The old familiar faces are all dear to him; the well-known voices do not disturb him; the little gleam of light that steals in between the curtains chequers some accustomed spot in the room that he has watched on many a former sick-bed. The stray words he catches are of home and homely topics. In a word, he is the centre of a little world, all anxious and eager about him, and even the old watch-dog subdues his growl out of deference to his comfort.

Now, though I am all gratitude for the affection and kindness of every one around me, I missed twenty things I could have had at Dodsborough, not one of them worth a brass farthing in reality, but priceless in the estimation of that peevish, fretful habit that grows out of a sick-bed. It was such a comfort to me to know how Miles Dogherty passed the night, and to learn whether he got a little sleep towards morning, as I did, and what the doctor thought of him. Then I liked to hear all the adventures of Joe Barret, when he "went in" for the leeches, how the mare threw him, and left him to

scramble home on his feet. Then I revelled in all that petty tyranny illness admits of, but which is only practicable amongst one's own people, refusing this, and insisting on that, just to exercise the little despotism that none rebel against, but which declines into a mixed monarchy on the first day you eat chicken-broth, and from which you are utterly deposed when you can dine at table. In good truth, Tom, I don't wonder at men becoming "malades imaginaires," seeing the unnatural importance they attain to by a life of complaining, and days passed in self-commiseration and sorrow.

In place of all this, think of a foreign country, and a foreign doctor; fancy yourself interrogated about your feelings in a language of which you scarcely know a word, and are conscious that a wrong tense in your verb may be your death-warrant. Imagine yourself endeavouring, through the flighty visions of a wandering intellect, to find out the subjunctive mood, or the past participle, and almost forgetting the torment of your gout in the terrors of your grammar!

This is a tiresome theme, and let us change it. Like all home-grown people, I see you expect me to send you a full account of Italy and the Italians within a month after my crossing the Alps. It is, after all, a pardonable blunder on your part, since the very titles we read to books of travels in the newspapers show, that for sketchy books there are always to be found "skipping" readers. Hence that host of surface-description that finds its way into print from men who have the impudence to introduce themselves as writers of "Jottings from my Note-Book," "Loose Leaves from my Log," "Smoke Puffs from Germany," and "A Canter over the Caucasus." Cannot these worthy folk see that the very names of their books are exactly the apologies they should offer for not having written them, had any kind but indiscreet friend urged them into letter-press? "I was only three weeks in Sweden, and therefore I wrote about it," seems to me as ugly a *non sequitur* as need be. And now, Tom, that I have inveighed against the custom, I am quite ready to follow the example, and if you could only find me a publisher, I am open to an offer for a tight little octavo, to be called "Italy from my Bedroom Window."

Most writers set out by bespeaking your attention on the ground of their greater opportunities, their influential acquaintances, position, and so forth. To this end, therefore, must I tell you, that my bedroom window, besides a half-view of the lake, has a full look-out over a very picturesque landscape of undulating surface, dotted with villas and cottages, and backed by a high mountain, which forms the frontier towards Switzerland. At the first glance it seems to be a dense wood, with foliage of various shades of green, but gradually you detect little patches of maize and rice, and occasionally, too, a green crop of wurzel or turnips, which would be creditable even in England; but the vine and the olive surround these so completely, or the great mul-

berry-trees enshadow them so thoroughly, that at a distance they quite escape view. The soil is intersected everywhere by canals for irrigation, and water is treasured up in tanks, and conveyed in wooden troughs for miles and miles of distance, with a care that shows the just value they ascribe to it. Their husbandry is all spade work, and I must say neatly and efficiently done. Of course, I am here speaking of what falls under my own observation; and it is, besides, a little pet spot of rich proprietors, with tasteful villas, and handsomely laid-out gardens on every side; but as the system is the same generally, I conclude that the results are tolerably alike also. The system is this: that the landlord contributes the soil, and the peasant the labour, the produce being fairly divided afterwards in equal portions between them. It reads simple enough, and it does not sound unreasonable either; while, with certain drawbacks, it unquestionably contains some great advantages. To the landlord it affords a fair and a certain remuneration, subject only to the vicissitudes of seasons and the rate of prices. It attaches him to the soil, and to those who till it, by the very strongest of all interests, and, even on selfish grounds, enforces a degree of regard for the well-being of those beneath him. The peasant, on the other hand, is neither a rack-rented tenant nor a hireling, but an independent man, profiting by every exercise of his own industry, and deriving direct and positive benefit from every hour of his labour. It is not alone his character that is served by the care he bestows on the culture of the land, but every comfort of himself and his family are the consequences of it; and lastly, he is not obliged to convert his produce into money to meet the rent-day. I am no political economist, but it strikes me that it is a great burden on a poor man, that he must buy a certain commodity in the shape of a legal tender, to satisfy the claim of a landlord. Now, here the peasant has no such charge. The day of reckoning divides the produce, and the "state of the currency" never enters into the question. He has neither to hunt fairs nor markets, look out for "dealers" to dispose of his stock, nor solicit a banker to discount his small bill. All these are benefits, Tom, and some of them great ones, too. The disadvantages are, that the capabilities of the soil are not developed by the skilful employment of capital. The landlord will not lay out money of which he is only to receive one-half the profit. The peasant has the same motive, and has not the money besides. The result is, that Italy makes no other progress in agriculture than the skill of an individual husbandman can bestow. Here are no Smiths of Deanstown—no Sinclairs—no Mechis.* The grape ripens, and the olive grows as it did centuries ago; and so will both doubtless continue to do for ages to come. Again, there is another, and in some respects a greater, grievance, since it is one which saps the very essence of all that is good in the system. The contract is rarely a direct one between landlord and tenant, but is made by the intervention of a third party, who employs the labourers, and really occupies

the place of our middleman at home. The fellow is usually a hard taskmaster to the poor man, and a rogue to the rich one; and it is a common thing, I am told, for a fine estate to find itself at last in the hands of the fattore. This is a sore complication, and very difficult to avoid, for there are so many different modes of culture, and such varied ways of treating the crops on an Italian farm, that the overseer must be sought for in some rank above that of the peasant.

We have a notion in Ireland that the Italian lives on maccaroni: depend upon it, Tom, he seasons it with something better. In the little village beside me, there are three butchers' shops, and as the wealthy of the neighbourhood all market at Como, these are the recourse of the poorer classes. Of wine he has abundance; and as to vegetables and fruits, the soil teems with them in a rich luxuriance of which I cannot give you a notion. Great barges pass my window every morning, with melons, cucumbers, and cauliflowers, piled up half-mast high. How a Dutch painter would revel in the picturesque profusion of grapes, peaches, figs, and apricots, heaped up amidst huge pumpkins of bursting ripeness, and those brilliant "love apples," the allusion to which was so costly to Mr. Pickwick. You are smacking your lips already at the bare idea of such an existence. Yes, Tom, you are reproaching Fate for not having "raised" you, as Jonathan says, on the right side of the Alps, and left you to the enjoyments of an easy life, with lax principles, little garments, and a fine climate. But let me tell you, IDLENESS IS ONLY A LUXURY WHERE OTHER PEOPLE ARE OBLIGED TO WORK; where every one indulges in it, it is worth nothing. I remember, when sitting listlessly on a river's bank, of a sunny day, listening to the hum of the bees, or watching the splash of a trout in the water, I used to hug myself in the notion of all the fellows that were screaming away their lungs in the Law Courts; or sitting upon tall stools in dark counting-houses; or poring over Blue-books in a committee-room; or, maybe, broiling on the banks of the Ganges; and then bethink me of the easy, careless, happy flow of my own existence. I was quite a philosopher in this way—I despised riches, and smiled at all ambition.

Now, there is no such resources for me here. There are eight or nine fellows that pass the day—and the night also, I believe—under my window, that would beat me hollow in the art of doing nothing, and seem to understand it as a science besides. There they lie—and a nice group they are—on their backs, in the broiling sun; their red nightcaps drawn a little over their faces for shade; their brawny chests and sinewy limbs displayed, as if in derision of their laziness. The very squalor of their rags seems heightened by the tawdry pretension of a scarlet sash round the waist, or a gay flower stuck jauntily in a filthy bonnet. The very knife that stands half buried in the water-melon beside them has its significance—you have but to glance at

the shape to see that, like its owner, its purpose is an evil one. What do these fellows know of labour?—Nothing; nor will they, ever, till condemned to it at the galleys. And what a contrast to all around them—ragged, dirty, and wretched, in the midst of a teeming and glorious abundance; barbarous, in a land that breathes of the very highest civilisation, and sunk in brutal ignorance, beside the greatest triumphs of human genius.

What a deal of balderdash people talk about Italian liberty, and the cause of constitutional freedom. There are—and these only in the cities—some twenty or thirty highly cultivated, well-thinking men—lawyers, professors, or physicians, usually—who have taken pains to study the institutions of other countries, and aspire to see some of the benefits that attend them applied to their own; but there ends the party. The nobles are a wretched set, satisfied with the second-hand vices of France and England grafted upon some native rascalities of even less merit. They neither read nor think; their lives are spent in intrigue and play. Now and then a brilliant exception stands forth, distinguished by intellect as well as station; but the little influence he wields is the evidence of what estimation such qualities are held in. My doctor is a Liberal, and a very clever fellow too; and I only wish you heard him describe the men who have assumed the part of "Italian Regenerators."

Their "antecedents" show that in Italy, as elsewhere, patriotism is too often but the last refuge of a scoundrel. I know how all this will grate and jar upon your very Irish ears; and, to say truth, I don't like saying it myself; but still I cannot help feeling that the "Cause of Liberty" in the peninsula is remarkably like the process of grape-gathering that now goes on beneath my window—there is no care, no selection—good, bad, ripe, and unripe—the clean, the filthy, the ruddy, and the sapless, are all huddled together, pressed and squeezed down into a common vat, to ferment into bad wine, or—a revolution—as the case may be. It does not require much chemistry to foresee that it is the crude, the acrid, the unhealthy, and the bad, that will give the flavour to the liquor. The small element of what is really good, is utterly overborne in the vast Maelstrom of the noxious; and so we see in the late Italian struggle. Who are the men that exercised the widest influence in affairs? Not the calm and reasoning minds who gave the first impulse to wise measures of Reform, and guided their sovereigns to concessions that would have formed the strong foundations of future freedom. No; it was the advocate of the wildest doctrines of Socialism—the true disciple of the old guillotine school, that ravaged the earth at the close of the last century. These are the fellows who scream "Blood! blood!" till they are hoarse; but, in justice to their discretion, it must be said, they always do it from a good distance off.

Don't fancy from this that I am upholding the Austrian rule in Italy. I

believe it to be as bad as need be, and exactly the kind of government likely to debase and degrade a people, whom it should have been their object to elevate and enlighten. Just fancy a system of administration where there were all penalties and no rewards—a school with no premiums but plenty of flogging. That was precisely what they did. They put a "ban" upon the natives of the country; they appointed them to no places of trust or confidence; insulted their feelings; outraged their sense of nationality; and whenever the system had goaded them into a passionate burst of indignation, they proclaimed martial law, and hanged them.

Now, the question is not whether any kind of resistance would not be pardonable against such a state of things, but it is this: what species of resistance is most likely to succeed? That is the real inquiry; and I don't think it demands much knowledge of mankind and the world to say that stabbing a cadet in the back as he leaves a *café*, shooting a solitary sentinel on his post, or even assassinating his corporal as he walks home of an evening, are exactly the appropriate methods for reforming a state or remodelling a constitution. Had the Lombards devoted themselves heart and hand to the material prosperity of their country—educated their people, employed them in useful works, fostered their rising and most prosperous silk manufactories—they would have attained to a weight and consideration in the Austrian Empire which would have enabled them not to solicit, but dictate the terms of their administration.

A few years back, as late as '47, Milan, I am told, was more than the rival of Vienna in all that constitutes the pride and splendour of a capital city; and the growing influence of her higher classes was already regarded with jealousy by the Austrian nobility. Look what a revolution has made her now! Her palaces are barracks; her squares are encampments; artillery bivouac in her public gardens; and the rigours of a state of siege penetrate into every private house, and poison all social intercourse.

You may rely upon one thing, Tom, and it is this: that no Government ever persisted in a policy of oppression towards a country that was advancing on the road of prosperity. It is to the disaffected, dispirited, bankrupt people—idle and cantankerous, wasting their resources, and squandering their means of wealth—that Cabinets play the bully. They grind them the way a cruel colonel flogs a condemned regiment. Let industry and its consequences flow in; let the labourer be well fed, and housed, and clothed; and the spirit of independence in him will be a far stronger and more dangerous element to deal with than the momentary burst of passion that comes from a fevered heart in a famished frame! Ask a Cabinet Minister if he wouldn't be more frightened by a deputation from the City, than if the telegraph told him a Chartist mob was moving on London? We live in an age of a very

peculiar kind, and where real power and real strength are more respected than ever they were before.

Don't you think I have given you a dose of politics? Well, happily for you, I must desist now, for Cary has come to order me off to bed. It is only two P.M., but the siesta is now one of my habits, and so pleasant a one, that I intend to keep it when I get well again.

Nine o'clock, Evening.

Here I am again at my desk for you, though Cary has only given me leave to devote half an hour to your edification. What a good girl it is; so watchful in all her attention, and with that kind of devotion that shows that her whole heart is engaged in what she is doing. The doctor may fight the malady, Tom, but take my word for it, it is the nurse that saves the patient. If ever I raised my eyelids, there she was beside me! I couldn't make a sign that I was thirsty till she had the drink to my lips. She had, too, that noiseless, quiet way with her, so soothing to a sick man; and, above all, she never bothered with questions, but learned to guess what I wanted, and sat patiently watching at her post.

It is a strange confession to make, but the very best thing I know of this foreign tour of ours is, that it has not spoiled that girl; she has contracted no taste for extra finery in dress, nor extra liberty in morals; her good sense is not overlaid by the pretentious tone of those mock nobles that run about calling each other Count and Marquis, and fancying they are the great world. There she is, as warm-hearted, as natural, and as simple—in all that makes the real excellence of simplicity—as when she left home. And now, with all this, I'd wager a crown that nineteen young fellows out of twenty would prefer Mary Anne to her. She is, to be sure, a fine, showy girl, and has taken to a stylish line of character so naturally that she never abandons it.

I assure you, Tom, the way she used to come in of a morning to ask me how I was, and how I passed the night; her graceful stoop to kiss me; her tender, little, caressing twaddle, as if I was a small child to be bribed into black-bottle by sugar candy, were as good as a play. The little extracts, too, that she made from the newspapers to amuse me, were all from that interesting column called fashionable intelligence and the movements in fashionable life, as if it amused me to hear who Lady Jemima married, and who gave away the bride. Cary knew better what I cared for, and told me about the harvest and the crops, and the state of the potatoes, with now and then a spice of the foreign news, whenever there was anything remarkable. To all appearance, we are not far from a war; but where it's to be, and with whom, is hard to say. There's no doubt but fighting is a costly

amusement; and I believe no country pays so heavily for her fun in that shape as England; but, nevertheless, there is nothing would so much tend to revive her drooping and declining influence on the Continent as a little brush at sea. She is, I take it, as good as certain to be victorious; and the very fervour of the enthusiasm success would evoke in England would go far to disabuse the foreigner of his notion that we are only eager about printing calicoes, and sharpening Sheffield ware. Believe me, it is vital to us to eradicate this fallacy; and until the world sees a British fleet reeling up the Downs with some half-dozen dismasted line-of-battle ships in their wake, they'll not be convinced of what you and I know well—that we are just the same people that fought the Nile and Trafalgar. Those Industrial Exhibitions, I think, brought out a great deal of trashy sentimentality about universal brotherhood, peace, and the rest of it. I suppose the Crystal Palace rage was a kind of allegory to show that they who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones; but our ships, Tom—our ships, as the song says, are "hearts of oak!" Here's Cary again, and with a confounded cupful of something green at top and muddy below! Apothecaries are filthy distillers all the world over, and one never knows the real blessing of health till one has escaped from their beastly brewings. Good night.

Saturday Morning.

A regular Italian morning, Tom, and such a view! The mists are swooping down the Alps, and showing cliffs and crags in every tint of sunlit verdure. The lake is blue as a dark turquoise, reflecting the banks and their hundred villas in the calm water. The odour of the orange flower and the oleander load the air, and, except my vagabonds under the window, there is not an element of the picture devoid of interest and beauty. There they are as usual; one of them has his arm in a bloody rag I perceive, the consequence of a row last night—at least Paddy Byrne saw a fellow wiping his knife and washing his hands in the lake—very suspicious circumstances, just as he was going to bed.

I have been hearing all about our neighbours—at least, Cary has been interrogating the gardener, and "reporting progress" to me as well as she could make him out. This Lake of Como seems the paradise of *ci-devant* theatrical folk; all the Prima Donnas who have amassed millions, and all the dancers that have pirouetted into great wealth, appear to have fixed their ambition on retiring to this spot. Of a truth, it is the very antithesis to a stage existence. The silent and almost solemn grandeur of the scene, the massive Alps, the deep dense woods, the calm unbroken stillness, are strong contrasts to the crash and tumult, the unreality and uproar, of a theatre. I wonder, do they enjoy the change? I am curious to know if they yearn for the blaze of the dress-circle and the waving pit? Do they long at heart for

the stormy crash of the orchestra and the maddening torrent of applause? and does the actual world of real flowers, and trees, and terraces, and fountains, seem in their eyes a poor counterfeit of the dramatic one? It would not be unnatural if it were so. There is the same narrowing tendency in every professional career. The Doctor, the Lawyer, the Priest, the Soldier—ay, and even your Parliament man, if he be an old Member, has got to take a House of Commons standard for everything and everybody. It is only your true idler, your genuine good-for-nothing vagabond, that ever takes wide or liberal views of life; one like myself, in short, whose prejudices have not been fostered by any kind of education, and who, whatever he knows of mankind, is sure to be his own.

They've carried away my ink-bottle, to write acknowledgments and apologies for certain invitations the women-kind have received to go and see fire-works somewhere on the Lake; for these exhibitions seem to be a passion with Italians! I wish they were fonder of burning powder to more purpose! I'm to dine below to-day, so it is likely that I'll not be able to add anything to this before to-morrow, when I mean to despatch it. A neighbour, I hear, has sent us a fine trout; and another has forwarded a magnificent present of fruit and vegetables; very graceful civilities these to a stranger, and worthy of record and remembrance. Lord George tells me that these Lombard Lords are fine fellows—that is, they keep splendid houses and capital horses, have first-rate cooks, and London-built carriages—and, as he adds, will bet you what you like at piquet or écarté. Egad, such qualities have great success in the world, despite all that moralists may say of them!

The ink has come back, but it is *I* am dry now! The fact is, Tom, that very little exertion goes far with a man in this climate! It is scarcely noon, but the sultry heat is most oppressive; and I half agree with my friends under the window, that the dorsal attitude is the true one for Italy. In any other country you want to be up and doing: there are snipe or woodcocks to be shot, a salmon to kill, or a fox to hunt; you have to look at the potatoes, or the poor-house; there's a row, or a road session, or something or other to employ you: but here, it's a snug spot in the shade you look for—six feet of even ground under a tree; and with that the hours go glibly over, in a manner that is quite miraculous.

It ought to be the best place under the sun for men of small fortune. The climate alone is an immense economy in furs and firing; and there is scarcely a luxury that is not, somehow or other, the growth of the soil: on this head —the expense I mean—I can tell you nothing; for, of course, I have not served on any committee of the estimates since my illness; but I intend to audit the accounts to-morrow, and then you shall hear all. Tiverton, I understand, has taken the management of everything; and Mrs. D. and Mary Anne tell me, so excellent is his system, that a rebellion has broken out

below stairs, and three of our household have resigned, carrying away various articles of wardrobe, and other property, as an indemnity, doubtless, for the treatment they had met with. I half suspect that any economy in dinners is more than compensated for in broken crockery; for every time that a fellow is scolded in the drawing-room, there is sure to be a smash in the plate department immediately afterwards, showing that the national custom of the "vendetta" can be carried into the "willow pattern." This is one of my window observations. I wish there were no worse ones to record.

"Not a line, not another word, till you take your broth, Papa," says my kind nurse; and as after my broth I take my sleep, I'll just take leave of you for to-day. I wish I may remember even half of what I wanted to say to you to-morrow, but I have a strong moral conviction that I shall not. It is not that the oblivion will be any loss to you, Tom; but when I think of it, after the letter is gone, I'm fit to be tied with impatience. Depend upon it, a condition of hopeless repining for the past is a more terrible torture than all that the most glowing imagination of coming evil could ever compass or conceive.

Sunday Afternoon.

I told you yesterday I had not much faith in my memory retaining even a tithe of what I wished to say to you. The case is far worse than that—I can really recollect nothing. I know that I had questions to ask, doubts to resolve, and directions to give, but they are all so commingled and blended together in my distracted brain, that I can make nothing out of the disorder. The fact is, Tom, the fellow has bled me too far, and it is not at my time of life—58° in the shade, by old Time's thermometer—that one rallies quickly out of the hands of the doctor.

I thought myself well enough this morning to look over my accounts; indeed, I felt certain that the inquiry could not be prudently delayed, so I sent for Mary Anne after breakfast, and proceeded in state to a grand audit. I have already informed you that all the material of life here is the very cheapest. Meat about fourpence a pound; bread, and butter, and milk, and vegetables, still more reasonable; wine, such as it is, twopence a bottle; fruit for half nothing. It was not, therefore, any inordinate expectation on my part that we should be economising in rare style, and making up for past extravagance by real retrenchment. I actually looked forward to the day of reckoning as a kind of holiday from all care, and for once in my life revel in the satisfaction of having done a prudent thing.

Conceive my misery and disappointment—I was too weak for rage—to find that our daily expenses here, with a most moderate household, and no company, amounted to a fraction over five pounds English a day. The broad

fact so overwhelmed me, that is was only with camphor-julap and ether that I got over it, and could proceed to details. Proceed to details, do I say! much good did it do me! for what between a new coinage, new weights and measures, and a new language, I got soon into a confusion and embarrassment that would have been too much for my brain in its best days. Now and then I began to hope that I had grappled with a fact, even a small one; but, alas! it was only a delusion, for though the prices were strictly as I told you, there was no means of even approximating to the quantities ordered in. On a rough calculation, however, it appears that *my* mutton broth took half a sheep per diem. The family consumed about two cows a week in beef—besides hares, pheasants, hams, and capons at will. The servants—with a fourth of the wine set down to me—could never have been sober an hour; while our vegetable and fruit supply would have rivalled Covent Garden market.

"Do you understand this, Mary Anne?" said I.

"No, Papa," said she.

"Does your Mother?" said I.

"No, Papa."

"Does Lord George understand it?"

"No, Papa; but he says he is sure Giacomo can explain everything; for he is a capital fellow, and honest as the sun!"

"And who is Giacomo?" said I.

"The Maestro di Casa, Papa. He is over all the other servants, pays all the bills, keeps the keys of everything, and, in fact, takes charge of the household."

"Where did he come from?"

"The Prince Belgiasso had him in his service, and strongly recommended him to Lord George as the most trustworthy and best of servants. His discharge says that he was always regarded rather in the light of a friend than a domestic!"

Shall I own to you, Tom, that I shuddered as I heard this. It may be a most unfair and ungenerous prejudice, but if there be any class in life of whose good qualities I entertain a weak opinion, it is of the servant tribe, and especially of those who enter into the confidential category. They are, to my thinking, a pestilent race, either tyrannising over the weakness, or fawning to the vices of their employers. I have known a score of them, and I rejoice to think that a very large proportion of that number have been since transported for life.

"Does Giacomo speak English?" asked I.

"Perfectly, Papa; as well as French, Spanish, German, and a little Russian."

"Send him to me, then," said I, "and let us have a talk together."

"You can't see him to-day, Papa, for he is performing St. Barnabas in a grand procession that is to take place this evening."

This piece of information shows me that it is a "Festa," and the post will consequently close early, so that I now conclude this, promising that you shall have an account of my interview with Giacomo by to-morrow or the day after.

Not a line from James yet, and I am beginning to feel very uncomfortable about him.

Yours ever faithfully,
KENNY I. DODD.

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## LETTER XXII.

KENNY JAMES DODD TO THOMAS PURCELL, ESQ., OF THE GRANGE, BRUFF.

Como.

MY DEAR TOM,—This may perchance be a lengthy despatch, for I have just received a polite invitation from the authorities here to pack off, bag and baggage, over the frontier; and, as it is doubtful where our next move may take us, I write this "in extenso" and to clear off all arrears up to the present date.

At the conclusion of my last, if I remember aright, I was in anxious expectation of a visit from Signor Giacomo Lamporecchio. That accomplished gentleman, however, had been so fatigued by his labours in the procession, and so ill from a determination of blood to the head, brought on by being tied for two hours to a tree, with his legs uppermost, to represent the saint's martyrdom, that he could not wait upon me till the third day after the Festa; and then his streaked eyeballs and flushed face attested that even mock holiness is a costly performance.

"You are Giacomo?" said I, as he entered; and I ought to mention that in air and appearance he was a large, full, fine-looking man, of about eight-and-thirty or forty, dressed in very accurate black, and with a splendid chain of mosaic gold twined and festooned across his ample chest; opal shirt-studs and waistcoat buttons, and a very gorgeous-looking signet-ring on his fore-finger, aided to show off a stylish look, rendered still more imposing by a

beard a Grand Vizier might have envied, and a voice a semi-tone deeper than Lablache's.

"Giacomo Lamporecchо," said he; and though he uttered the words like a human bassoon, they really sounded as if he preferred not to be himself, but somebody else in case I desired it.

"Well, Giacomo," said I, easily, and trying to assume as much familiarity as I could with so imposing a personage, "I want you to afford me some information about these accounts of mine."

"Ah! the house accounts!" said he, with a very slight elevation of the eyebrows, but quite sufficient to convey to me an expression of contemptuous meaning.

"Just so, Giacomo; they appear to me high—enormously, extravagantly high!"

"His Excellency paid, at least, the double in London," said he, bowing.

"That's not the question. We are in Lombardy—a land where the price of everything is of the cheapest. How comes it, then, that we are maintaining our house at greater cost than even Paris would require?"

With a volubility that I can make no pretension to follow, the fellow ran over the prices of bread, meat, fowls, and fish, showing that they were for half their cost elsewhere: that his Excellency's table was actually a mean one; that sea-fish from Venice, and ortolans, seldom figured at it above once or twice a week; that it was rare to see a second flask of champagne opened at dinner; that our Bordeaux was bad, and our Burgundy bitter; in short, he thought his Excellency had come expressly for economy, as great "Milors" will occasionally do, and that if so, he must have had ample reason to be satisfied with the experiment.

Though every sentiment the fellow uttered was an impertinence, he bowed, and smiled, and demeaned himself with such an air of humility throughout, that I stood puzzled between the matter and the manner of his address. Meanwhile, he was not idle, but running over with glib volubility the names of all the "illustrissimi Inglesi" he had been cheating and robbing for a dozen years back. To nail him to the fact of the difference between the cost of the article and the gross sum expended, was downright impossible, though he clearly gave to understand that any inquiry into the matter showed his Excellency to be the shabbiest of men—mean, grasping, and avaricious; and, in fact, very likely to be no "Milor" at all, but some poor pretender to rank and station.

I felt myself waxing wroth with a weak frame—about as unpleasant a situation as can be fancied; for, let me observe to you, Tom, that the brawny proportions of Signor Lamporecchо would not have prevented my trying conclusions with him, had I been what you last saw me; but, alas! the Italian doctor had bled me down so low that I was not even a match for one of his

countrymen. I was therefore obliged to inform my friend, that, being alone with him, and our interview having taken the form of a privileged communication, he was a thief, and a robber!

The words were not uttered, when he drew a long and glistening knife from behind his back, under his coat, and made a rush at me. I seized the butt-end of James's fishing-rod—fortunately beside me—and held him at bay, shouting wildly, "Murder!" all the while. The room was filled in an instant; Tiverton and the girls, followed by all the servants and several peasants, rushing in pell-mell. Before, however, I could speak, for I was almost choked with passion, Signor Giacomo had gained Lord George's ear, and evidently made him his partisan.

Tiverton cleared the room as fast as he could, mumbling out something to the girls that seemed to satisfy them and allay their fears, and then, closing the door, took his seat beside me.

"It will not signify," said he to me, in a kind voice; "the thing is only a scratch, and will be well in a day or two."

"What do you mean?" said I.

"Egad! you'll have to be cautious, though" said he, laughing. "It was in a very awkward place; and that tool isn't the handiest for minute anatomy."

"Do you want to drive me mad, my Lord; for, if not, just take the trouble to explain yourself."

"Pooh, pooh," said he; "don't fuss yourself about nothing. I understand how to deal with these fellows. You'll see, five-and-twenty Naps. will set it all right."

"I see," said I, "your intention is to outrage me; and I beg that I may be left alone."

"Come, don't be angry with *me*, Dodd," cried he, in one of his good-tempered, coaxing ways. "*I* know well you'd never have done it——"

"Done what—done what?" screamed I, in an agony of rage.

He made a gesture with the fishing-rod, and burst out a-laughing for reply.

"Do you mean that I stuck that scoundrel that has just gone out?" cried I.

"And no great harm either!" said he.

"Do you mean that I stuck him?—answer me that."

"Well, I'd be just as much pleased if you had not," said he; "for, though they are always punching holes into each other, they don't like an Englishman to do it. Still, keep quiet, and I'll set it all straight before to-morrow. The doctor shall give a certificate, setting forth mental excitement and so forth. We'll show that you are not quite responsible for your actions just now."

"Egad, you'll have a proof of your theory, if you go on much longer at this rate," said I, grinding my teeth with passion.

"And then we'll get up a provocation of some kind or other. Of course, the thing will cost money—that can't be helped—but we'll try to escape imprisonment."

"Send Cary to me—send my daughter here!" said I, for I was growing weak.

"But hadn't you better let us concert——"

"Send Cary to me, my Lord, and leave me!" and I said the words in a way that he couldn't misunderstand. He had scarcely quitted the room when Cary entered it.

"There, dearest Papa," said she, caressingly, "don't fret. It's a mere trifle; and if he wasn't a wretchedly cowardly creature he'd think nothing of it!"

"Are you in the conspiracy against me, too?" cried I; "have *you* also joined the enemy?"

"That I haven't," said she, putting an arm round my neck; "and I know well, if the fellow had not grossly outraged, or perhaps menaced you, you'd never have done it! I'm certain of that, Pappy!"

Egad, Tom, I don't like to own it, but the truth is—I burst out a-crying; that's what all this bleeding and lowering has brought me to, that I haven't the nerve of a kitten! It was the inability to rebut all this balderdash—to show that it was a lie from beginning to end—confounded me; and when I saw my poor Cary, that never believed ill of me before, that, no matter what I said or did, always took my part, and if she couldn't defend at least excused me—when, I say, I saw that *she* gave in to this infernal delusion, I just felt as if my heart was going to break, and I sincerely wished it might.

I tried very hard to summon strength to set her right; I suppose that a drowning man never struggled harder to reach a plank than did I to grasp one thought well and vigorously; but to no use. My ideas danced about like the phantoms in a magic lantern, and none would remain long enough to be recognised.

"I think I'll take a sleep, my dear," said I.

"The very wisest thing you could do, Pappy," said she, closing the shutters noiselessly, and sitting down in her old place beside my bed.

Though I pretended slumber, I never slept a wink. I went over all this affair in my mind, and summing up the evidence against me, I began to wonder if a man ever committed a homicide without knowing it—I mean, if, when his thoughts were very much occupied, he could stick a fellow-creature and not be aware of it. I couldn't exactly call any case in point to mind, but I didn't see why it might not be possible. If stabbing people was a common

and daily habit of an individual, doubtless he might do it, just as he would wind his watch or wipe his spectacles, while thinking of something else; but as it was not a customary process, at least where I came from, there was the difficulty. I would have given more than I had to give, just to ask Cary a few questions—as, for instance, how did it happen? where is the wound? how deep is it? and so on—but I was so terrified lest I should compromise my innocence, that I would not venture on a syllable. One sees constantly in the police reports how the prisoner, when driving off to gaol with Inspector Potts, invariably betrays himself by some expression of anxiety or uneasiness, such as, "Well, nobody can say I did it! I was in Houndsditch till eleven o'clock;" or, "Poor Molly, I didn't mean her any harm, but it was she begun it." Warned by these indiscreet admissions, I was guarded not to utter a word. I preserved my resolution with such firmness, that I fell into a sound sleep, and never awoke till the next morning.

Before I acknowledged myself to be awake—don't you know that state, Tom, in which a man vibrates between consciousness and indolence, and when he has not fully made up his mind whether he'll not skulk his load of daily cares a little longer?—I could perceive that there was a certain stir and movement about me that betokened extraordinary preparation, and I could overhear little scraps of discussions as to whether "he ought to be awakened," and "what he should wear," Cary's voice being strongly marked in opposition to everything that portended any disturbance of me. Patience, I believe, is not my forte, though long suffering may be my fortune, for I sharply asked, "What the —— was in the wind now?"

"We'll leave him to Cary," said Mrs. D., retiring precipitately, followed by the rest, while Cary came up to my bedside, and kindly began her inquiries about my health; but I stopped her, by a very abrupt repetition of my former question.

"Oh! it's a mere nothing, Pappy—a formality, and nothing more. That creature, Giacomo, has been making a fuss over the affair of last night; and though Lord George endeavoured to settle it, he refused, and went off to the Tribunal to lodge a complaint."

"Well, go on."

"The Judge, or Prefect, or whatever he is, took his depositions, and issued a warrant——"

"To apprehend me?"

"Don't flurry yourself, dearest Pappy; these are simply formalities, for the Brigadier has just told me——"

"He is here, then—in the house?"

"Why will you excite yourself in this way, when I tell you that all will most easily be arranged. The Brigadier only asks to see you—to ascertain, in fact, that you are really ill, and unable to be removed——"

"To gaol—to the common prison, eh?"

"Oh, I must not talk to you, if it irritates you in this fashion; indeed, there is now little more to say, and if you will just permit the Brigadier to come in for a second, everything is done."

"I'm ready for him," said I, in a tone that showed I needed no further information; and Cary left the room.

After about five minutes' waiting, in an almost intolerable impatience, the Brigadier, stooping his enormous bearskin to fully three feet, entered with four others, armed cap-à-pie, who drew up in a line behind him, and grounded their carbines with a clank that made the room shake. The Brigadier, I must tell you, was a very fine soldierlike fellow, and with fully half a dozen decorations hanging to his coat. It struck me that he was rather disappointed; he probably expected to see a man of colossal proportions and herculean strength, instead of the poor remnant of humanity that chicken broth and the lancet have left me. The room, too, seemed to fall below his expectations; for he threw his eyes around him without detecting any armoury, or offensive weapons, or indeed any means of resistance whatever.

"This is his Excellency?" said he at last, addressing Cary; and she nodded.

"Ask him his own name, Cary," said I. "I'm curious about it."

"My name," said he, sonorously, to her question—"my name is Alessandro Lamporeccho;" and with that he gave the word to his people to face about, and away they marched, with all the solemnity of a military movement. As the door closed behind them, however, I heard a few words uttered in whispers, and immediately afterwards the measured tread of a sentry slowly parading the lobby outside my room.

"That's another *formality*, Cary," said I, "isn't it?" She nodded for reply. "Tell them I detest ceremony, my dear," said I; "and—and"—I couldn't keep down my passion—"and if they don't take that fellow away, I'll pitch him head and crop over the banisters." I tried to spring up, but back I fell, weak, and almost fainting. The sad truth came home to me at once, that I hadn't strength to face a baby; so I just turned my face to the wall, and sulked away to my heart's content. If I tell you how I spent that day, the same story will do for the rest of the week. I saw that they were all watching and waiting for some outbreak, of either my temper or my curiosity. They tried every means to tempt me into an inquiry of one kind or other. They dropped hints, in half-whispers, before me. They said twenty things to arouse anxiety, and even alarm, in me; but I resolved that, if I passed my days there, I'd starve them out: and so I did.

On the ninth day, when I was eating my breakfast, just as I had finished my mutton chop, and was going to attack the eggs, Cary, in a half-laughing way, said: "Well, Pappy, do you never intend to take the air again? The

weather is now delightful—that second season they call the summer of St. Joseph."

"Ain't I a prisoner?" said I. "I thought I had murdered somebody, and was sentenced for life to this chamber."

"How can you be so silly!" said she. "You know perfectly well how these foreigners make a fuss about everything, and exaggerate every trifle into a mock importance. Now, we are not in Ireland——"

"No," said I, "would to Heaven we were!"

"Well, perhaps I might echo the prayer, without doing any great violence to my sincerity; but as we are not there, nor can we change the venue—isn't that the phrase?—to our own country, what if we just were to make the best of it, and suffer this matter to take its course here?"

"As how, Cary?"

"Simply by dressing yourself, and driving into Como. Your case will be heard on any morning you present yourself; and I am so convinced that the whole affair will be settled in five minutes, that I am quite impatient it should be over."

I will not repeat all her arguments, some good, and some bad, but every one of them dictated by that kind and affectionate spirit which, however her judgment incline, never deserts her. The end of it was, I got shaved and dressed, and within an hour was skimming over the calm clear water towards the little city of Como.

Cary was with me—she would come—she said she knew she did me good; and it was true: but the scene itself, those grand, great mountains, those leafy glens, opening to the glassy lake, waveless and still, that glorious reach of blue sky, spanning from peak to peak of those Alpine ridges, all soothed and calmed me; and in the midst of such gigantic elements, I could not help feeling shame that such a reptile as I should mar the influence of this picture on my heart by petty passions and little fractious discontents unworthy of a sick schoolboy.

"Isn't it enough for you, K. I.," said I, "ay, and more than you deserve, just to live, and breathe, and have your being, in such a bright and glorious world? If you were a Poet, with what images would not these swooping mists, these fleeting shadows, people your imagination? What voices would you hear in the wind sighing through the olive groves, and dying in many a soft cadence along the grottoed shore? If a Painter, what effects of sunlight and shadow are there to study? what tints of colour, that, without nature to guarantee, you would never dare to venture on? But being neither, having neither gift nor talent, being simply one of those 'fruit consumers,' who bring back nothing to the common stock of mankind, and who can no more make my fellow-man wiser or better than I make myself taller or younger, is it not a matter of deep thankfulness that, in all my common-

place of mind and thought, I too—even K. I. that I am—have an intense feeling of enjoyment in the contemplation of this scene? I couldn't describe it like Shelley, nor paint it like Stanfield, but I'll back myself, for a five-pound note, to feel it with either of them." And there, let me tell you, Tom, is the real superiority of Nature over all her counterfeits. You need no study, no cultivation, no connoisseurship to appreciate her: her glorious works come home to the heart of the Peasant, as, mist-begirt, he waits for sunrise on some highland waste, as well as to the Prince, who gazes on the swelling landscape of his own dominions. I couldn't tell a Claude from a Canaletti—I'm not sure that I don't like H. B. better than Albert Durer—but I'd not surrender the heartfelt delight, the calm, intense, deep-souled gratitude I experience from the contemplation of a lovely landscape, to possess the Stafford gallery.

I was, then, in a far more peaceful and practicable frame of mind as we entered Como than when I quitted the villa.

I should like to have lingered a little in the old town itself, with its quaint little arched passages and curious architecture; but Cary advised me to nurse all my strength for the "Tribunal." I suppose it must be with some moral hope of discountenancing litigation that foreign Governments always make the Law Courts as dirty and disgusting as possible, pitch them in a filthy quarter, and surround them with every squalor. This one was a paragon of its kind, and for rags and ruffianly looks I never saw the equal of the company there assembled. I am not yet quite sure that the fellow who showed us the way didn't purposely mislead us; for we traversed a dozen dark corridors, and went up and went down more staircases than I have accomplished for the last six months. Now and then we stopped for a minute to interrogate somebody through a sliding pane in a kind of glass cage, and off we went again. At last we came to a densely crowded passage, making way through which, we entered a large hall with a vaulted roof, crammed with people, but who made room at the instance of a red-eyed, red-bearded little man in a black gown, that I now, to my horror and disgust, found out was my counsel, being already engaged by Lord George to defend me.

"This is treachery, Cary," whispered I, angrily.

"I know it is," said she, "and I'm one of the traitors; but anything is better than to see you pine away your life in a sick-room."

This was neither the time nor place for much colloquy, as we now had to fight our way vigorously through the mob till we reached a row of seats where the Bar were placed, and where we were politely told to be seated. Directly in front of us sat three ill-favoured old fellows in black gowns and square black caps, modelled after those brown-paper helmets so popular with plasterers and stucco men in our country. I found it a great trial not to laugh every time I looked at them!

There was no case "on" at the moment, but a kind of wrangle was going forward about whose was to be the next hearing, in which I could hear my own name mingled. My lawyer, Signor Mastuccio, seemed to make a successful appeal in my favour; for the three old "plasterers" put up their eye-glasses, and stared earnestly at Cary, after which the chief of them nodded benignly, and said that the case of Giacomo Lamporeccho might be called; and accordingly, with a voice that might have raised the echoes of the Alps, a fellow screamed out that the "homicidio"—I have no need to translate the word—was then before the Court. If I only were to tell you, Tom, of the tiresome, tedious, and unmeaning formalities that followed, your case in listening would be scarcely more enviable than was my own while enduring them. All the preliminary proceedings were in writing, and a dirty little dog, with a vile odour of garlic about him, read some seventy pages of a manuscript which I was informed was the accusation against me. Then appeared another creature—his twin brother in meanness and poverty—who proved to be a doctor, the same who had professionally attended the wounded man, and who also read a memoir of the patient's sufferings and peril. These occupied the Court till it was nigh three o'clock, when, being concluded, Giacomo himself was called. I assure you, Tom, I gave a start when, instead of the large, fine, burly, well-bearded rascal with the Lablache voice, I beheld a pale, thin, weakly creature, with a miserable treble, inform the Court that he was Giacomo Lamporeccho.

Cary, who translated for me as he spoke, told me that he gave an account of our interview together, in which it would appear that my conduct was that of an outrageous maniac. He described me as accusing everybody of roguery and cheating—calling the whole country a den of thieves, and the authorities their accomplices. He detailed his own mild remonstrances against my hasty judgment, and his calm appeals to my better reason. He dwelt long upon his wounded honour, and, what he felt still more deeply, the wounded honour of his nation; and at last he actually began to cry when his feelings got too much for him, at which the Court sobbed, and the Bar sobbed, and the general audience, in a mixture of grief and menace, muttered the most signal vengeance against your humble servant.

I happened to be—a rare thing for me, latterly—in one of my old moods, when the ludicrous and the absurd carry away all my sympathies; and faith, Tom, I laughed as heartly as ever I did in my life at the whole scene. "Are we coming to the wound yet, Cary," said I, "tell me that," for the fellow had now begun again.

"Yes, Papa, he is describing it, and, by his account, it ought to have killed him."

"Egad," said I, "it will be the death of *me* with laughing;" and I shook till my sides ached.

"Does his Excellency know that he is in a Court of Justice?" said Plasterer No 1.

"Tell him, my dear, that I quite forgot it. I fancied I was at a play, and enjoyed it much."

I believe Cary didn't translate me honestly, for the old fellow seemed appeased, and the case continued. I could now perceive that my atrocious conduct had evoked a very strong sentiment in the auditory, for there was a great rush forward to get a look at me, and they who were fortunate enough to succeed, complimented me by a string of the most abusive and insulting epithets.

My advocate was now called on, and seeing him rise, I just whispered to Cary, "Ask the Judge if we may see the wound?"

"What does that question mean?" said the Chief Judge, imperiously. "Would the prisoner dare to insinuate that the wound has no existence?"

"You've hit it," said I. "Tell him, Cary, that's exactly what I mean."

"Has not the prisoner sworn to his sufferings," repeated he, "and the doctor made oath as to the treatment?"

"They're both a pair of lying scoundrels. Tell him so, Cary."

"You see him now. There is the man himself in his true colours, most illustrious and most ornate Judges," exclaimed Giacomo, pointing to me with his finger, as I nearly burst with rage.

"Ah! che diavolo! che demonio infernale!" rang out amidst the waving crowd; and the looks bestowed on me from the Bench seemed to give hearty concurrence to the opinion.

Now, Tom, a Court of Justice, be its locale ever so humble, and its procedure ever so simple, has always struck me as the very finest evidence of homage to civilisation. There is something in the fact of men submitting, not only their worldly interests and their characters, but even their very passions, to the arbitration of their fellow-men, that is indescribably fine and noble, and shows—if we even wanted such a proof,—that this corrupt nature of ours, in the midst of all its worst influences, has still some of that Divine essence within, unsullied and untarnished. And just as I reverence this, do I execrate, with all my heart's indignation, a corrupt judicature. The governments who employ, and the people who tolerate them, are well worthy of each other.

Take all the vices that degrade a nation, "bray them in a mortar," and they'll not eat so deep into the moral feeling of a people as a tainted administration of the law.

You may fancy that, in my passionate warmth, I have forgotten all about my individual case: no such thing. I have, however, rescued myself from the danger of an apoplexy by opening this safety-valve to my indignation. And now I cannot resume my narrative. No, Tom, "I have lost the scent," and all I can do is to bring you "in at the death." I was sentenced to pay

seven hundred zwanzigers—eightpences—all the costs of the procedure, the doctor's bill, and the maintenance of Giacomo till his convalescence was completed. I appealed on the spot to an upper court, and the judgment was confirmed! I nearly burst with indignant anger, and asked my advocate if he had ever heard of such iniquity. He shrugged his shoulders, smiled slightly, and said, "The law is precarious in all countries."

"Yes—but," said I, "the judges are not always corrupt. Now, that old President of the First Court suggested every answer to the witness——"

"Vincenzio Lamporeccho is a shrewd man——"

"What! How do you call him? Is he anything to our friend Giacomo?"

"He is his father!"

"And the brigadier who arrested me?"

"Is his brother. The Junior-Judge of the Appeal Court, Luigi Lamporeccho, is his first cousin."

I didn't ask more questions, Tom. Fancy a country where your butler is brother to the Chief Baron, and sues you for wages in the Court of Exchequer!

"And you, Signor Mastuccio," said I. "I hope I have not exposed you to the vengeance of this powerful family by your zeal in my behalf?"

"Not in the least," said he; "my mother was a Lamporeccho herself."

Now, Tom, I think I need not take any more pains to explain the issue of my lawsuit; and here I'll leave it.

My parting benediction to the Court was brief. "Good-by, old gentlemen. I'm glad you have the Austrians here to bully you; and not sorry that *you* are here to assassinate *them*." This speech was overheard by some learned linguist in court, and on the same evening I received an intimation to quit the Imperial dominions within twenty-four hours. Tiverton was for going up to Milan to Radetzky, or somebody else, and having it all "put straight," as he calls it; but I would not hear of this.

"We'll write to the Ambassador at Vienna?" said he.

"Nor that either," said I.

"To the *Times*, then."

"Not a word of it."

"You don't mean to say," said he, "that you'll put up with this treatment, and that you'll lower the name of Briton before these foreigners, by such a tame submission?"

"My view of the case is a very simple one, my Lord," said I; "and it is this. We travelling English are very prone to two faults; one is, a bullying effort to oppose ourselves to the laws of the countries we visit; and then, when we fail, a whining appeal to some Minister or Consul to take up our battle. The first is stupid—the latter is contemptible. The same feeling that would prevent me trespassing on the hospitality of an unwilling host,

will rescue me from the indignity of remaining in a country where my presence is distasteful to the rulers of it."

"Such a line of conduct," said he, "would expose us to insult from one end of Europe to the other."

'And if it teach us to stay at home, and live under laws that we understand, the price is not too high for the benefit."

He blustered away about what he wouldn't do in the Press, and in his "place" in Parliament; but what's the use of all that? Will England go to war for Kenny James Dodd? No. Well, then, by no other argument is the foreigner assailable. Tell the Austrian or the Russian Government that the company at the "Freemasons'" dinner were shocked, and the ladies at Exeter Hall were outraged at their cruelty, and they'll only laugh at you. We can't send a fleet to Vienna; nor—we wouldn't if we could.

I didn't tell Lord George, but to you, in confidence, Tom, I will say, I think we have—if we liked it—a grand remedy for all these cases. Do you know that it was thinking of Tim Ryan, the rat-catcher at Kelly's mills, suggested it to me. Whenever Tim came up to a house with his traps and contrivances, if the family said they didn't need him, "for they had no rats," he'd just loiter about the place till evening—and, whatever he did, or how he did it, one thing was quite sure, they had never to make the same complaint again! Now, my notion is, whenever we have any grudge with a foreign State, don't begin to fit out fleets or armaments, but just send a steamer off to the nearest port with one of the refugees aboard. I'd keep Kossuth at Malta, always ready; Louis Blanc and Ledru Rollin at Jersey; Don Miguel and Don Carlos at Gibraltar; and have Mazzini, and some of the rest, cruising about for any service they may be wanted on. In that way, Tom, we'd keep these Governments in order, and, like Tim Ryan, be turning our vermin to a good account besides!

I thought that Mrs. D. and Mary Anne displayed a degree of attachment to this place rather surprising, considering that I have heard of nothing but its inconvenience till this moment, when we are ordered to quit it. Now, however, they suddenly discover it to be healthful, charming, and economical. I have questioned Cary as to the secret of this change, but she does not understand it. She knows that Lord George received a large packet by the post of this morning, and instantly hurried off to communicate its contents to Mary Anne. By George! Tom, I have come to the notion that to rule a family of four people, one ought to have a "detective officer" attached to the household. Every day, or so, something puzzling and inexplicable occurs, the meaning of which never turns up till you find yourself duped, and then it is too late to complain. Now, this same letter Cary speaks of is at this very instant exercising a degree of influence here, and I am to remain in ignorance of the cause till I can pick it out from the effect. This, too, is

another blessed result of foreign travel! When we lived at home the incidents of our daily life were few, and not very eventful; they were circumscribed within narrow limits, and addressed themselves to the feelings of every one amongst us. Concealment would have been absurd, even were it possible; but the truth was, we were all so engaged with the same topics and the same spirit, that we talked of them constantly, and grew to think that outside the little circle of ourselves the world was a mere wilderness. To be sure, all this sounds very narrow-minded, and all that. So it does; but let me tell you, it conduces greatly to happiness and contentment.

Now, here, we have so many irons in the fire, some one or other of us is always burning his fingers!

I continue to be very uneasy about James. Not a line have we had from him, and he's now several weeks gone! I wrote to Vickars, but have not yet heard from him in reply. Cary endeavours to persuade me that it is only his indolent, careless habit is in fault; but I can see that she is just as uncomfortable and anxious as myself.

You will collect from the length of this document that I am quite myself again; and, indeed, except a little dizziness in my head after dinner, and a tendency to sleep, I'm all right. Not that I complain of the latter, far from it, Tom. Sancho Panza himself never blessed the inventor of it more fervently than I do.

Sometimes, however, I think that it is the newspapers are not so amusing as they used to be. The racy old bitterness of party spirit is dying out, and all the spicy drollery and epigrammatic fun of former days gone with it. It strikes me too, Tom, that "Party," in the strong sense, never can exist again amongst us. Party is essentially the submission of the many to the few, and so long as the few were pre-eminent in ability and tactical skill, nothing was more salutary. Walpole, Pelham, Pitt, and Fox, stood immeasurably above the men and the intelligence of their time. Their statecraft was a science of which the mass of their followers were totally ignorant, and the crew never dreamt of questioning the pilot as to the course he was about to take. Whereas now—although by no means deficient in able and competent men to rule us—the body of the House is filled by others very little their inferiors. Old Babington used to say, "that between a good physician and a bad one, there was only the difference between a pound a guinea." In the same way, there is not a wider interval now, between the Right Honourable Secretary on the Treasury Bench, and the Honourable Member below him. Education is widely disseminated—the intercourse of club life is immense—opportunities of knowledge abound on every hand—the press is a great popular instructor; and, above all, the temper and tendency of the age favours labour of every kind. Idleness is not in vogue with any class of the whole community. What chance, then, of any man, no matter how great

and gifted he be, imposing his opinions—*as such*—upon the world of politics? A Minister, or his opponent, may get together a number of supporters for a particular measure, just as you or I could muster a mob at an election or a fair; but there would be no more discipline in the one case than in the other. They'd come now, and go when they liked; and any chance of reducing such "irregulars" to the habits of an army, would be downright impossible!

There is another cause of dulness, too, in the newspapers. All the accidents—a most amusing column it used to be—are now entirely caused by railroads; and there is a shocking sameness about them. They were "shunting" waggons across the line when the express came up, or the pointsman didn't turn the switch, or the fog obscured the danger signal. With these three explanations, some hundreds of human beings are annually mashed, smothered, and scalded, and the survivors not a whit more provident than before.

Cruel assaults upon women—usually the wives of the ruffians themselves—are, I perceive, becoming a species of popular custom in England. Every *Times* I see has its catalogue of these atrocities; and I don't perceive that five shilling fines nor even three weeks at the treadmill diminishes the number. One of the railroad companies announces that it will not hold itself responsible for casualties, nor indemnify the sufferers. Don't you think that we might borrow a hint from them, and insert some clause of the same kind into the marriage ceremony, and that the woman should know all her "liabilities" without any hope of appeal? Ah! Tom Purcell, all our naval reviews, and industrial exhibitions, and boastful "leading" articles about our national greatness, come with a very ill grace in the same broad sheet with these degrading Police histories. Must savage ferocity accompany us as we grow in wealth and power? If so, then I'd rather see us a third-rate power to-morrow, than rule the world at the cost of such disgrace!

Ireland I see jogs on just as usual, wrangling away. They can't even agree whether the potatoes have got the rot or not. Some of the papers, too, are taking up the English cry of triumph over the downfal of our old Squirearchy; but it does not sound well from *them*. To be sure, some of the new proprietors would seem not only to have taken our estates, but tasted the Blarney-stone besides; and one, a great man, too, has been making a fine speech, with his "respected friend, the Reverend Mr. O'Shea," on his right hand, and vowing that he'll never turn out anybody that pays the rent, nor dispossess a good tenant! The stupid infatuation of these English makes me sick, Tom. Why, with all their self-sufficiency, can't they see that we understand our own people better than they do? We know the causes of bad seasons and short harvests better; we know the soil better, and the climate better, and if we haven't been good landlords, it is simply because we couldn't

afford it. Now, they are rich, and can afford it; and if they have bought up Irish estates to get the rents out of them, I'd like to know what's to be the great benefit of the change. "Pay up the arrears," says I; but if my Lord Somebody from England says the same, I think there's no use in selling *me* out, and taking *him* in my place. And this brings me to asking when I'm to get another remittance? I *am* thinking seriously of retrenchment; but first, Tom, one must have something to retrench upon. You must possess a salary before you can stand "stoppages." Of course we mean "to come home again." I haven't heard that the Government have selected me for a snug berth in the Colonies; so be assured that you'll see us all back in Dodsborough before——

Mrs. D. had been looking over my shoulder, Tom, while I was writing the last line, and we have just had what she calls an "explanation," but what ordinary grammarians would style—a row. She frankly and firmly declares that I may try Timbuctoo or the Gambia if I like, but back to Ireland she positively will not go! She informs me, besides, that she is quite open to an arrangement about a separate maintenance. But my property, Tom, is like poor Jack Heffernan's goose—it wouldn't bear carving, so he just helped himself to it all! And, as I said to Mrs. D., two people may get some kind of shelter under one umbrella, but they'll infallibly be wet through if they cut it in two, and each walk off with his half. "If you were a bit of a gentleman," said she, "you'd give it all to the lady." That's what I got for my illustration.

But now that I'm safe once more, I repeat you shall certainly see us back in our old house again, and which, for more reasons than I choose to detail here, we ought never to have quitted.

I have been just sent for to a Cabinet Council of the family, who are curious to know whither we are going from this; and as I wish to appear prepared with a plan, and am not strong in geography, I'll take a look at the map before I go. I've hit it, Tom—Parma. Parma will do admirably. It's near, and it's never visited by strangers. There's a gallery of pictures to look at, and, at the worst, plenty of cheese to eat. Tourists may talk and grumble as they will about the dreary aspect of these small capitals, without trade and commerce, with a beggarly Court and a ruined nobility—to me they're a boon from Heaven. You can always live in them for a fourth of the cost of elsewhere. The head inn is your own, just as the Piazza is, and the park at the back of the palace. It goes hard but you can amuse yourself poking about into old churches, and peeping into shrines, and down wells, pottering into the market-place, and watching the bargaining for eggs and onions; and when these fail, it's good fun to mark the discomfiture of your womankind at being shut up in a place where there's neither opera nor playhouse—no promenade, no regimental band, and not even a milliner's shop.

From all I can learn, Parma will suit me perfectly; and now I'm off to announce my resolve to the family. Address me there, Tom, and with a sufficiency of cash to move further when necessary.

I'm this moment come back, and not quite satisfied with what I've done. Mrs. D. and Mary Anne approve highly of my choice. They say nothing could be better. Some of us must be mistaken, and I fervently trust that it may not be

Your sincere friend,
KENNY JAMES DODD.

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## LETTER XXIII.

JAMES DODD TO LORD GEORGE TIVERTON, M.P.

Cour de Vienne, Mantua.

MY DEAR GEORGE,—I've only five minutes to give you; for the horses are at the door, and we're to start at once. I have a great budget for you when we meet; for we've been over the Tyrol and Styria, spent ten days at Venice, and "done" Verona and the rest of them—John Murray in hand.

We're now bound for Milan, where I want you to meet us on our arrival, with an invitation from my Mother, asking Josephine to the Villa. I've told her that the note is already there awaiting her, and for mercy sake, let there be no disappointment.

This dispensation is a horribly tedious affair; but I hope we shall have it now within the present month. The interval *she* desires to spend in perfect retirement, so that the Villa is exactly the place, and the attention will be well timed.

Of course they ought to receive her as well as possible. Mary Anne, I know, requires no hint; but try and persuade the Governor to trim himself up a little, and if you could make away with that old flea-bitten robe he calls his dressing-gown, you'd do the State some service. Look to the servants, too, and smarten them up: a cold perspiration breaks over me when I think of Betty Cobb!

I rely on you to think of and provide for everything, and am ever your attached friend,

JAMES DODD.

I changed my last five hundred pound note at Venice, so that I must bring the campaign to a close immediately.

## LETTER XXIV.

MRS. DODD TO MRS. MARY GALLAGHER, DODSBOROUGH.

Parma. The "Cour de Parme."

My dear Molly,—When I wrote to you last, we were living, quietly it is true and unostensively, but happily, on the Lake of Comus, and there we might have passed the whole Autumn, had not K. I., with his usual thoughtfulness for the comfort of his family, got into a row with the police, and had us sent out of the country.

No less, my dear! Over the frontier in twenty-four hours was the word; and when Lord George wanted to see some of the great people about it, or even make a stir in the newspapers, he wouldn't let him. "No," said he "the world is getting tired of Englishmen that are wronged by foreign governments. They say, naturally enough, that there must be some fault in ourselves, if we are always in trouble, this way; and, besides, I would not take fifty pounds, and have somebody get up in the House and move for all the correspondence in the case of Mr. Dodd, so infamously used by the authorities in Lombardy." Them's his words, Molly; and when we told him that it was a fine way of getting known and talked about in the world, what was his answer do you think? "I don't want notoriety; and if I did, I'd write a letter to the *Times*, and say it was I that defended Hougoumont, in the battle of Waterloo. There seems to be a great dispute about it, and I don't see why I couldn't put in my claim."

I suppose after that, Molly, there will be very little doubt that his head isn't quite right, for he was no more at Waterloo than you or me.

It was a great shock to us when we got the order to march; for on that same morning the post brought us a letter from James, or, at least, it came to Lord George, and with news that made me cry with sheer happiness for full two hours after. I wasn't far wrong, Molly, when I told you that it's little need he'd have of learning, or a profession. Launch him out well in life was my words to K. I. Give him ample means to mix in society and make friends, and see if he won't turn it to good account. I know the boy well; and that's what K. I. never did—never could.

See if I'm not right, Mary Gallagher. He went down to the baths of—— I'm afraid of the name, but it sounds like "Humbug," as well as I can make

out—and what does he do but make acquaintance with a beautiful young creature, a widow of nineteen, rolling in wealth, and one of the first families in France.

How he did it, I can't tell; no more than where he got all the money he spent there on horses, and carriages, and dinners, and elegant things that he ordered for her from Paris. He passed five weeks there, courting her, I suppose; and then away they went, rambling through Germany, and over the mountains down to Venice. She in her own travelling-carriage, and James driving a team of four beautiful greys of his own; and then meeting when they stopped at a town, but all with as much discretion as if it was only politeness between them. At last he pops the question, Molly; and it turns out that she has no objection in life, only that she must get a dispensation from the Pope, because she was promised and betrothed to the King of Naples, or one of his brothers; and though she married another, she never got what they call a Bull of release.

This is the hardest thing in the world to obtain; and if it wasn't that she has a Cardinal an uncle, she might never get it. At all events, it will take time, and meanwhile she ought to live in the strictest retirement. To enable her to do this properly, and also by way of showing her every attention, James wrote to have an invitation ready for her to come down to the villa and stay with us on a visit.

By bad luck, my dear, it was the very morning this letter came, K. I. had got us all ordered away! What was to be done, was now the question; we daren't trust him with the secret till she was in the house, for we knew well he'd refuse to ask her—say he couldn't afford the expense, and that we were all sworn to ruin him. We left it to Lord George to manage; and he, at last, got K. I. to fix on Parma for a week or two, one of the quietest towns in Italy, and where you never see a coach in the streets, nor even a well-dressed creature out on Sunday. K. I. was delighted with it all; saving money is the soul of him, and he never thinks of anything but when he can make a hard bargain. What he does with his income, Molly, the saints alone can tell; but I suspect that there's some sinners, too, know a trifle about it; and the day will come when I'll have the proof! Lord G. sent for the landlord's tariff, and it was reasonable enough. Rooms were to be two zwanzigers—one and fourpence—a piece; breakfast, one; dinner, two zwanzigers; tea, half a one; no charge for wine of the place; and if we stayed any time, we were to have the key of a box at the Opera.

K. I. was in ecstasy. "If I was to live here five or six years," says he, "and pay nobody, my affairs wouldn't be so much embarrassed as they are now!"

"If you'd cut off your encumbrances, Mr. Dodd," says I, "that would save somethin."

"My what?" said he, flaring up, with a face like a turkey-cock.

But I wasn't going to dispute with him, Molly, so I swept out of the room, and threw down a little china flower-pot just to stop him.

That same day we started, and arrived here at the hotel, the Cour de Parme, by midnight; it was a tiresome journey, and K. I. made it worse, for he was fighting with somebody or other the whole time; and Lord George was not with us, for he had gone off to Milan to meet James; and Mr. D. was therefore free to get into as many scrapes as he pleased. I must say, he didn't neglect the opportunity, for he insulted the passport people and the custom-house officers, and the man at the bridge of boats, and the postmasters and postilions everywhere. "I didn't come here to be robbed," said he everywhere; and he got a few Italian words for "thief," "rogue," "villain," and so on; and if I saw one, I saw ten knives drawn on him that blessed day. He wouldn't let Cary translate for him, but sat on the box himself, and screamed out his directions like a madman. This went on till we came to a place called San Donino, and there—it was the last stage from Parma—they told him he couldn't have any horses, though he saw ten of them standing all ready harnessed and saddled in the stable. I suppose they explained to him the reason, and that he didn't understand it, for they all got to words together, and it was soon who'd scream loudest amongst them.

At last K. I. cried out, "Come down, Paddy, and see if we can't get four of these beasts to the carriage, and we'll not ask for a postilion."

Down jumps Paddy out of the rumble, and rushes after him into the stable. A terrible uproar followed this, and soon after the stable people, helpers, ostlers, and postboys, were seen running out of the door for their lives, and K. I. and Paddy after them, with two rack staves they had torn out of the manger. "Leave them to me," says K. I.; "leave them to me, Paddy, and do you go in for the horses; put them to, and get a pair of reins if you can; if not, jump up on one of the leaders, and drive away."

If he was bred and born in the place he could not have known it better, for he came out the next minute with a pair of horses, that he fastened to the carriage in a trice, and then hurried back for two more, that he quickly brought out and put to also. "There's no whip to be found," says he, "but this wattle will do for the leaders; and if your honour will stir up the wheelers, here's a nice little handy stable fork to do it with." With this Paddy sprung into the saddle, K. I. jumped up to the box, and off they set, tearing down the street like mad. It was pitch dark, and of course neither of them knew the road, but K. I. screamed out, "Keep in the middle, Paddy, and don't pull up for any one." We went through the village at a full gallop, the people all yelling and shouting after us; but at the end of the street there were two roads, and Paddy cried out, "Which way now?" "Take the widest, if you can see it," screamed out K. I.; and away he went

at a pace that made the big travelling-carriage bump and swing like a boat at sea.

We soon felt we were going down a dreadful steep, for the carriage was all but on top of the horses, and K. I. kept screaming out, "Keep up the pace, Paddy. Make them go, or we'll all be smashed." Just as he said that, I heard a noise, like the sea in a storm, a terrible sound of rushing, dashing, roaring water, then a frightful yell from Paddy, followed by a plunge. "In a river, by ——!" roared out K. I.; and as he said it the coach gave a swing over to one side, then righted, then swung back again, and with a crash that I thought smashed it to atoms, fell over on one side into the water.

"All right," said K. I.; "I turned the leaders short round and saved us!" and with that he began tearing and dragging us out. I fell into a swoon after this, and know no more of what happened. When I came to myself I was in a small hut, lying on a bed of chestnut-leaves, and the place crowded with peasants and postilions.

"There's no mischief done, Mamma," said Cary. "Paddy swam the leaders across beautifully, for the traces snapped at once, and except the fright, we're nothing the worse."

"Where's Mary Anne?" said I.

"Talking to the gentleman who assisted us—outside—some friend of Lord George's, I believe, for he is with him."

Just as she said this, in comes Mary Anne with Lord George and his friend.

"Oh, Mamma," says she, in a whisper, "you don't know who it is—the Prince himself!"

"Ah, been and done it, Marm," said he, addressing me with his glass in his eye.

"What, Sir?" said I.

"Taken a 'header,' they tell me, eh? Glad there's no harm done.

"His Serene Highness hopes you'll not mind it, Mamma," said Mary Anne.

"Oh, is *that* it?" said I.

"Yes, Mamma. Isn't he delightful—so easy, so familiar, and so truly kind, also."

"He has just ordered up two of his own carriages to take us on."

By this time his Serene Highness had lighted his cigar, and, seating himself on a log of wood in the corner of the hut, began smoking. In the intervals of the puffs he said:

"Old Gent took a wrong turning—should have gone left—water very high, besides, from the late rains—regular smash—wish I'd seen it."

K. I. now joined us, all dripping, and hung round with weeds and water-lilies—as Lord George said, like an ancient river God. "In any other part

of the globe," said he, "there would have been a warning of some kind or other stuck up here to show there wasn't a bridge; but exactly as I said yesterday, these little beggarly states, with their petty governments, are the curse of Europe."

"Hush, Papa, for mercy sake," whispered Mary Anne; "this is the Prince himself; it is his Serene Highness——"

"Oh, the devil!" said he.

"My friend, Mr. Dodd, Prince," said Lord George, presenting him with a sly look, as much as to say, "the same I told you about."

"Dodd—Dodd—fellow of that name hanged, wasn't there?" said the Prince.

"Yes, your Highness; he was a Doctor Dodd, who committed forgery, and for whom the very greatest public sympathy was felt at the time," said K. I.

"Your father, eh?"

"No, your Highness, no relation whatever."

"Won't have him at any price, George," said the Prince, with a wink. "Never draw a weed, Miss?" said he, turning to Mary Anne.

I don't know what she said, but it must have been smart, for his Serene Highness laughed heartily, and said:

"Egad, I got it there, Tiverton!"

In due time a royal carriage arrived. The prince himself handed us in, and we drove off with one of the Court servants on the box. To be sure, we forgot that we had left K. I. behind; but Mary Anne said he'd have no difficulty in finding a conveyance, and the distance was only a few miles.

"I wish his Serene Highness had not taken away Lord George," said Mary Anne; "he insists upon his going with him to Venice."

"For my part," said Cary, "though greatly obliged to the Prince for his opportune kindness to ourselves, I am still more grateful to him for this service."

On that, my dear, we had a dispute that lasted till we got to our journey's end: for, though the girls never knew what it was to disagree at home in Dodsborough, here, abroad, Cary's jealousy is such that she cannot control herself, and says at times the most cruel and unfeeling things to her sister.

At last we got to the end of this wearisome day, and found ourselves at the door of the inn. The Court servant said something to the landlord, and immediately the whole household turned out to receive us; and the order was given to prepare the "Ambassador's suite of apartments for us."

"This is the Prince's doing," whispered Mary Anne in my ear. "Did you ever know such a piece of good fortune?"

The rooms were splendid, Molly; though a little gloomy when we first

got in, for all the hangings were of purple velvet, and the pictures on the walls were dark and black, so that, though we had two lamps in our saloon and above a dozen candles, you could not see more than one-half the length of it.

I never saw Mary Anne in such spirits in my life. She walked up and down, admiring everything, praising everything; then she'd sit down to the piano and play for a few minutes, and then spring up and waltz about the room like a mad thing. As for Cary, I didn't know what became of her till I found that she had been down stairs with the landlord, getting him to send a conveyance back for her father, quite forgetting, as Mary Anne said, that any fuss about the mistake would only serve to expose us. And there, Molly, once for all, is the difference between the two girls! The one has such a knowledge of life and the world, that she never makes a blunder; and the other, with the best intentions, is always doing something wrong!

We waited supper for K. I. till past one o'clock; but, with his usual selfishness and disregard of others, he never came till it was nigh three, and then made such a noise as to wake up the whole house. It appeared, too, that he missed the coach that was sent to meet him, and he and Paddy Byrne came the whole way on foot! Let him do what he will, he has a knack of bringing disgrace on his family! The fatigue and wet feet, and his temper more than either, brought back the gout on him, and he didn't get up till late in the afternoon. We were in the greatest anxiety to tell him about James; but there was no saying what humour he'd be in, and how he'd take it. Indeed, his first appearance did not augur well. He was cross with everything and everybody. He said that sleeping on that grand bed with the satin hangings, was like lying in state after death, and that our elegant drawing-room was about as comfortable as a cathedral.

He got into a little better temper when the landlord came up with the bill of fare, and to consult him about the dinner.

"Egad!" said he, "I've ordered fourteen dishes; so I don't think they'll make much out of the two zwanzigers a head!" Out of decency he had to order Champagne, and a couple of bottles of Italian wine of a very high quality. "It's like all my economy," says he; "five shillings for a horse, and a pound to get him shod!"

We saw it was best to wait till dinner was over before we spoke to him; and, indeed, we were right, for he dined very heartily, finished the two bottles every glass, and got so happy and comfortable that Mary Anne sat down to the piano to sing for him.

"Thank you, my darling," said he, when she was done. "I've no doubt that the song is a fine one, and that you sung it well, but I can't follow the words, nor appreciate the air. I like something that touches me either with an old recollection, or by some suggestion for the future; and if you'd try

and remember the 'Meeting of the Waters,' or 'Where's the Slave so lowly'——"

"I'm afraid, Sir, I cannot gratify you," said she; and it was all she could do to get out of the room before he heard her sobbing.

"What's the matter, Jemi," said he, "did I say anything wrong? Is Molly angry with me?"

"Will you tell me," said I, "when you ever said anything right? Or do you do anything from morning till night but hurt the feelings and dance upon the tenderest emotions of your whole family? I've submitted to it so long," said I, "that I have no heart left in me to complain; but now that you drive me to it, I'll tell you my mind;" and so I did, Molly, till he jumped up at last, put on his hat, and rushed down stairs into the street. After which I went to my room, and cried till bed-time! As poor Mary Anne said to me, "There was a refined cruelty in that request of Papa's, I can never forget;" nor is it to be expected she should!

The next morning at breakfast he was in a better humour, for the table was covered with delicacies of every kind, fruit and liqueurs besides. "Not dear at eightpence, Jemi," he'd say, at every time he filled his plate. "Just think the way one is robbed by servants, when you see what can be had for a 'zwanziger;'" and he made Cary take down a list of the things, just to send to the *Times*, and show how the English hotels were cheating the public.

We saw that this was a fine opportunity to tell him about James, and so Mary Anne undertook the task. "And so he never went to London at all," he kept repeating all the while. No matter what she said about the Countess, and her fortune, and her great connexions; nothing came out of his lips but the same words.

"Don't you perceive," said I, at last, for I couldn't bear it any longer, "that he did better—that the boy took a shorter and surer road in life, than a shabby place under the Crown!"

"May be so," said he, with a deep sigh—"may be so! but I ought to be excused if I don't see at a glance how any man makes his fortune by marriage!"

I knew that he meant that for a provocation, Molly, but I bit my lips and said nothing.

We then explained to him that we had sent off a note to the Countess, asking her to pass a few weeks with us, and were in hourly expectation of her arrival.

He gave another heavy sigh, and drank off a glass of Curaçoa.

Mary Anne went on about our good luck in finding such a capital hotel, so cheap, and in such a sweet retired spot, just the very thing the Countess would like.

"Never went to London at all!" muttered K. I., for he couldn't get his

thoughts out of the old track. And, indeed, though we were all talking to him for more than an hour afterwards, it was easy to see that he was just standing still on the same spot as before. I don't ever remember passing a day of such anxiety as that, for every distant noise of wheels, every crack of a postilion's whip, brought us to the window to see if they were coming. We delayed dinner till seven o'clock, and put K. I.'s watch back, to persuade him it was only five; we loitered and lingered over it as long as we could, but no sight nor sound was there of their coming.

"Tell Paddy to fetch my slippers, Molly," said K. I., as we got into the drawing-room.

"Oh, Papa!" impossible," said she; "the Countess may arrive at any moment."

"Think of his never going to London at all " said he, with a groan.

I almost cried with spite, to see a man so lost to every sentiment of proper pride, and even dead to the prospects of his own children!

"Don't you think I might have a cigar?" said he.

"Is it here, Papa?" said Mary Anne. "The smell of tobacco would certainly disgust the Countess."

"He thinks it would be more flattering to receive her into all the intimacy of the family," said I, "and see us without any disguise."

"Egad, then," said he, bitterly, "she's come too late for *that;* she should have made our acquaintance before we began vagabondising over Europe, and pretending to fifty things we've no right to!"

"Here she is—here they are!" screamed Mary Anne at this moment, and, with a loud noise like thunder, the heavy carriage rolled under the arched gateway, while crack—crack—crack went the whips, and the big bell of the hall began ringing away furiously.

"*I'm* off, at all events," said K. I.; and snatching one of the candles off the table, he rushed out of the room as hard as he could go.

I hadn't more than time to put my cap straight on my head, when I heard them on the stairs; and then, with a loud bang of the folding doors, the landlord himself ushered them into the room. She was leaning on James's arm, but the minute she saw me, she rushed forward and kissed my hand! I never was so ashamed in my life, Molly. It was making me out such a great personage at once, that I thought I'd have fainted at the very notion. As to Mary Anne, they were in each other's arms in a second, and kissed a dozen times. Cary, however, with a coldness that I'll never forgive her for, just shook hands with her, and then turned to embrace James a second time.

While Mary Anne was taking off her shawl and her bonnet, I saw that she was looking anxiously about the room, "What is it?" said I to Mary Anne —"what does she want?" "She's asking where's the Prince; she means Papa," whispered Mary Anne to me; and then in a flash, I saw the way James

represented us. "Tell her, my dear," said I, "that the Prince wasn't very well, and has gone to bed." But she was too much engaged with us all to ask more about him, and we all sat down to tea, the happiest party ever you looked at. I had time now to look at her, and really, Molly, I must allow she was the handsomest creature I ever beheld. She was a kind of a Spanish beauty, brown, and with jet-black eyes and hair, but a little vermillion on her cheeks, and eye-lashes that threw a shadow over the upper part of her face. As to her teeth, when she smiled—I thought Mary Anne's good, but they were nothing in comparison. When she caught me looking at her, she seemed to guess what was passing in my mind, for she stooped down and kissed my hand twice or thrice with rapture.

It was a great loss to me, as you may suppose, that I couldn't speak to her, nor understand what she said to me; but I saw that Mary Anne was charmed with her, and even Cary—cold and distant as she was at first—seemed very much taken with her afterwards.

When tea was over, James sat down beside me, and told me everything "If the Governor will only behave handsomely for a week or two," said he—"I ask no more—that lovely creature and four thousand a year are all my own." He went on to show me that we ought to live in a certain style—not looking too narrowly into the cost of it—while she was with us. "She can't stay after the fourteenth," said he, "for her uncle the Cardinal is to be at Pisa that day, and she must be there to meet him; so that, after all, it's only three weeks I'm asking for, and a couple of hundred pounds will do it all. As for me," said he, "I'm regularly aground—haven't a ten-pound note remaining, and had to sell my 'drag' and my four greys at Milan, to get money to come on here."

He then informed me that her saddle-horses would arrive in a day or two, and that we should immediately provide others, to enable him and the girls to ride out with her. "She is used to every imaginable luxury," said he, "and has no conception that want of means could be the impediment to having anything one wished for."

I promised him to do my best with his Father, Molly; but you may guess what a task that was; for, say what I could, the only remark I could get out of him was, "It's very strange that he never went to London."

After all, Molly, I might have spared myself all my fatigue and all my labour, if I had only had the common sense to remember what he was—what he is—ay, and what he will be—to the end of the chapter. He wasn't well in the room with her the next morning, when I saw the old fool looking as soft and as sheepish at her as if he was making love himself. I own to you, Molly, I think she encouraged it. She had that French way with her, that seems to say, "Look as long as you like, and I don't mind it;" and so he did—and even after breakfast I caught him peeping under the *Times* at her

foot, which, I must say, was beautifully shaped and small, not but that the shoe had a great deal to say to it.

"I hope you're pleased, Mr. Dodd?" said I, as I passed behind his chair.

"Yes," said he; "the funds is rising."

"I mean with the prospect," said I.

"Yes," said he; "we'll be looking up presently."

"Better than looking down," said I, "you old fool!"

I couldn't help it, Molly, if it was to have spoiled everything—the words would come out.

He got very red in the face, Molly, but said nothing, and so I left him to his own reflections. And it is what I'm now going to do with yourself, seeing that I've come to the end of all my news, and carefully jotted down everything that has occurred here for your benefit. Four days have now passed over, and they don't seem like as many hours, though the place itself has not got many amusements.

The young people ride out every morning on horseback, and rarely come back until time to dress for dinner. Then we all meet; and I must say a more elegant display I never witnessed! The table covered with plate, and beautiful coloured glass globes filled with flowers. The girls in full dress—for the Countess comes down as if she was going to a Court, and wears diamond combs in her head, and a brooch of the same, as large as a cheese-plate. I, too, do my best, to make a suitable appearance—in crimson velvet and a spangled turban, with a deep fall of gold fringe—and, except the "Prince"—as we call K. I.—we are all fit to receive the Emperor of Russia.

In the evening we have music and a game of cards, except on the Opera nights, which we never miss; and then, with a nice warm supper at twelve o'clock, Molly, we close as pleasant a day as you could wish. Of course I can't tell you much more about the Countess, for I'm unable to talk to her, but she and Mary Anne are never asunder; and, though Cary still plays cold and retired, she can't help calling her a lovely creature.

It seems there is some new difficulty about the dispensation; and the Cardinal requires her to do "some meritorious works," I think they call them, before he'll ask for it. But if ever there was a saintly young creature, it is herself; and I hear she's up at five o'clock every morning, just to attend first mass.

Here they are now, coming up the stairs, and I haven't more than time to seal this, and write myself

Your attached friend,

JEMIMA DODD.

Mary Anne begs you will tell Kitty Doolan that she has not been able to write to her, with all the occupation she has lately had, but will take the very

first moment to send her at least a few lines. As James's good luck will soon be no secret, you may tell it to Kitty, and I think it won't be thrown away on her, as I suspect she was making eyes at him herself, though she might be his mother!

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## LETTER XXV.

MISS MARY ANNE DODD TO MISS DOOLAN, OF BALLYDOOLAN.

Parma.

Dearest Kitty,—It is but seldom I have to bespeak your indulgence on the score of my brevity, but I must do so now, overwhelmed as I am with occupation, and scarcely a moment left me that I can really call my own. Mamma's letter to Old Molly will have explained to you the great fortune which has befallen James, and, I might add, also, all who belong to him. And really, dearest, with all the assurance the evidence of my own senses can convey, I still find it difficult to credit such unparalleled luck. Fancy beauty, —and such beauty—youth, genius, mind, rank, and a large fortune, thrown, I may say, at his feet! She is Spanish, by the mother's side; "Las Caldenhas," I think the name, whose father was a Grandee of the first class. Her own father was the General Count de St. Amand, who commanded in the celebrated battle of Austerlitz in the retreat from Moscow. I'm sure, dearest, you'll be amazed at my familiarity with these historical events, but the truth is, she is a perfect treasury of such knowledge, and I must needs gain some little by the contact.

I am at a loss how to give you any correct notion of one whose universality seems to impart to her character all the semblance of contradictory qualities. She is, for instance, proud and haughty, to a degree little short of insolence. She exacts from men a species of deference little less than a slavish submission. As she herself says, "Let them do homage." All her ideas of life and society are formed on the very grandest scale. She has known, in fact, but one "set," and that has been one where royalties moved as private individuals. Her very trinkets recal such memories; and I have passed more than one morning admiring pearl earrings, with the cipher of the Czarawitsch; bracelets with the initials of an Austrian Archduke, and a diamond cross, which she forgot whether it was given her by Prince Metternich or Mehemet Ali. If you only heard her, too, how she talks of that "dear old thing, the ex-King of Bavaria," and with what affectionate regard she alludes to

"her second self—the Queen of Spain;" you'd feel at once, dearest Kitty, that you were moving amidst crowns and sceptres, with the rustle of royal purple beside, and the shadow of a thronely canopy over you. In one sense, this has been for us the very rarest piece of good fortune; for, accustomed as she has been to only one sphere—and that the very highest—she does not detect many little peculiarities in Papa's and Mamma's habits, and censure them as vulgar, but rather accepts them as the ways and customs among ordinary nobility. In fact, she thinks the prince, as she calls Papa, the very image of "Pozzo di Borgo;" and Mamma she can scarcely see without saying, "Your Majesty," she is so like the Queen Dowager of Piedmont.

As to James, if it were not that I knew her real sentiments, and that she loves him to distraction,—merely judging from what goes on in society—I should say he had not a chance of success. She takes pleasure, I almost think, in decrying the very qualities he has most pretension to. She even laughs at his horsemanship; and yesterday went so far as to say that activity was not amongst his perfections. James, who really is the very type of agility! One of her amusements is to propose to him some impossible feat or other, and the poor boy has nearly broken his back and dislocated his limbs by contortions that nothing but a fish could accomplish. But the contrarieties of her nature do not end here! She, so grave, so dignified, so imperious, I might even call it, before others, once alone with me becomes the wildest creature in existence. The very moment she makes her escape to her own room, she can scarcely control her delight at throwing off the "Countess," as she says herself, and being once again free, joyous, and unconstrained.

I have told her, over and over again, that if James only knew her in these moods, that he would adore her even more than he does now; but she only laughs, and says, "Well, time enough; he shall see me so one of these days." It was not till after ten or twelve days that she admitted me to her real confidence. The manner of it was itself curious. "Are you sleepy," said she to me, one evening as we went up-stairs to bed, "for, if not, come and pay me a visit in my room."

I accepted the invitation; and after exchanging my evening robe for a dressing-gown, hastened to the chamber. I could scarcely believe my eyes as I entered! She was seated on a richly embroidered cushion on the floor, dressed in Turkish fashion, loose trousers of gold-sprigged muslin, with a small fez of scarlet cloth on her head, and a jacket of the same coloured velvet almost concealed beneath its golden embroidery; a splendid scimitar lay beside her, and a most costly pipe, in pure Turkish taste, which, however, she did not make use of, but smoked a small paper cigarette instead.

"Come, dearest," said she, "turn the key in the door, and light your cigar; here we are at length free and happy." It was in vain that I assured her I

never had tried to smoke. At first she wouldn't believe, and then she actually screamed with laughter at me. "One would fancy," said she, "that you had only left England yesterday. Why, child, where have you lived, and with whom?" I cannot go over all she said; nor need I repeat the efforts I made to palliate my want of knowledge of life, which she really appeared to grieve over. "I should never think of asking your sister here," said she; "there is a frivolity in all her gaiety—a light-heartedness, without sentiment—that I cannot abide; but you, ma chère, you have a nature akin to my own. You ought, and, indeed, must be one of us."

So far as I could collect, Kitty—for remember I was smoking my first cigarette all this time, and not particularly clear of head—there is a set in Parisian society, the most exclusive and refined of all, who have voted the emancipation of woman from all the slavery and degradation to which the social usages of the world at large would condemn them. Rightly judging that the expansion of intelligence is to be acquired only in greater liberty of action, they have admitted them to a freer community and participation in the themes which occupy men's thoughts, and the habits which accompany their moods of reflection. Gifted, as we confessedly are, with nicer and more acute perceptions, finer powers of discrimination and judgment, greater delicacy of feeling, and more apt appreciation of the beautiful and the true, why should we descend to an intellectual bondage? As dearest Josephine says: "Our influence to be beneficial should be candidly and openly exercised, not furtively practised, and cunningly insinuated. Let us leave these arts to women who want to rule their husbands; our destiny be it—to sway mankind!" Her theory, so far as I understand it, is that men will not endure petty rivalries, but succumb at once to superior attainments. Thus, your masculine young lady, Kitty—your creature of boisterous manners, slang, and slap-dash—is invariably a disgust; but your true "Lionne," gifted, yet graceful, possessing every manly accomplishment, and yet employing her knowledge to enhance the charms of her society and render herself more truly companionable, the equal of men in culture, their superior in taste and refinement, exercises a despotic influence around her.

Men will quit the salon for the play-table. Let us, then, be gamblers for the nonce, and we shall not be deserted. They smoke, that they may get together and talk with a freedom and a licence not used before us. Let us adopt the custom, and we are no longer debarred from their intimacy and the power of infusing the refining influences of our sex through their barbarism! As Josephine says: "We are the martyrs, now, that we may be the masters, hereafter!"

I grew very faint, once or twice, while she was talking; and, indeed, at last, was obliged to lie down, and have my temples bathed with Eau-de-Cologne; so that I unluckily lost many of her strongest arguments and



[illegible] illustrations, but, from frequent conversations since, and from [illegible] the beautiful romances of George Sand, I have attained [illegible] full appreciation, at least an unbounded admiration of this beauti[illegible]

[illegible] forgotten to tell you that we met the Prince of Pontremoli on our [illegible] Serene Highness, Kitty! but as easy and as familiar as my [illegible] The drollest thing is, that he has lived while in England [illegible] fast people," and only talks a species of conventional slang in [illegible] them but for all that he is delightful—full of gaiety and [illegible] and has the wickedest dark eyes you ever beheld

[illegible] enquiries are boundless! Yesterday she read of a black [illegible] Emir of somewhere was sending as a present to General [illegible] immediately said, Oh, the General is exiled now, he [illegible] for [illegible] Poor James is out all the [illegible] despatch on this difficult service, but how [illegible] where the money is to come from—

Your affectionate and devoted
MARY ANNE DODD

[illegible] be dissatisfied, dearest Kitty, if I seal this without [illegible] and my own prospects But what can I [illegible] and shadowy in the dim future before me [illegible] I see it is but too plain to see—the anguish that [illegible] but he buries his sorrow within his soul, [illegible] beside the sepulchre! Oh, dearest, when you [illegible] when you come to ponder over the [illegible] has wrought in the world the fond [illegible] and the proud spirits degraded— [illegible] borne so long! and exclaim [illegible] shall we be free!'

## LETTER XXVI.

KENNY JAMES DODD TO THOMAS PURCELL, ESQ., OF THE GRANGE, BRUFF.

Parma.

My dear Tom, The little gleam of sunshine that shone upon us for the last week or so, has turned out to be but the prelude of a regular hurricane, and all our feasting and merriment have ended in gloom, darkness, and disunion. Mrs. D.'s letter to old Molly has made known to you the circumstances under which James returned home to us, without ever having gone to London. You, of course, know all about the lovely young widow, with her immense jointure and splendid connexions. If you do not, I must say that from my heart and soul I envy you, for I have heard of nothing else for the last fortnight! At all events, you have heard enough to satisfy you that the house of Dodd was about to garnish its escutcheon with some very famous quarterings—illustrious enough even to satisfy the pride of the M'Carthys. A Cardinal's daughter—niece I mean—with four thousand a year, had deigned to ally herself with us, and we were all running breast high in the blaze of our great success.

She came here on a visit to us while some negotiations were being concluded with the Papal Court, for we were great folk, Tom, let me tell you, and have been performing, so to say, in the same piece with Popes, Kings, and Cardinals, for the last month; and I, myself, under the style and title of the "Prince," have narrowly escaped going mad from the unceasing influences of delusions, shams, and impositions in which we have been living and moving.

Of our extravagant mode of life, I'll only say, that I don't think there was anything omitted which could contribute to ruin a moderate income. Splendid apartments, grand dinners, horses, carriages, servants, opera-boxes, bouquets, were all put in requisition to satisfy the young Countess that she was about to make a suitable alliance, and that any deficiencies observable in either our manners or breeding, were fully compensated for by our taste in cookery and our tact in wine. To be plain, Tom, to obtain this young widow with four thousand a year, we had to pretend to be possessed of about four times as much. It was a regular game of "brag" we were playing, and with a very bad hand of cards!

Hope led me on from day to day, trusting that each post would bring us

the wished-for consent, and that at least a private marriage would ratify the compact. Popes and Cardinals, however, are too stately for fast movements, and at the end of five weeks we hadn't so far as I could see, gained an inch of ground!

At one time his Holiness had gone off to Albano to bless somebody's bones, or the bones were coming to bless *him*, I forget which. At another, the King of Naples, fatigued with signing warrants for death and the galleys, desired to enjoy a little repose from public business. Cardinal Antonelli, hearing that we were Irish, got in a rage, and said that Ireland gave them no peace at all. And so it came to pass that the old thief—procrastination—was at his usual knavery; and for want of better, set to work to ruin poor Kenny Dodd!

It is only fair to observe, that except Cary and myself, nobody manifested any great impatience at this delay; and even she, I believe, merely felt it out of regard to me. The others seemed satisfied to fare sumptously every day, and assuredly the course of true love ran most smoothly along in rivulets of mock "turtle" and "potages à la fiancée." At last, Tom, I brought myself to book with the simple question, "How long can this continue? Will your capital stand it for a month, or even a week?" Before I attempted the answer I sent for Mrs. D., to give her the honour of solving the riddle if she could.

Our interview took place in a little crib they call my dressing-room, but which, I must remark to you, is a dark corner under a staircase, where the rats hold a parliament every night of the season. Mrs. D. was so shocked with the locality that she proposed our adjourning to her own apartment; and thither we at once repaired to hold our council.

I have too often wearied you with our domestic differences to make any addition to such recitals pleasant to either of us. You know us both thoroughly, besides, and can have no difficulty in filling up the debate which ensued. Enough, that I say Mrs. D. was more than usually herself. She was grandly eloquent on the prospect of the great alliance; contemptuously indifferent about the petty sacrifice it was to cost us; caustically criticised the narrow-mindedness by which I measured such grandeur; winding up all with the stereotyped comparison between Dodds and M'Carthys, with which she usually concludes an engagement, just as they play "God save the Queen" at Vauxhall to show that the fireworks are over.

"And now," said I, "that we have got over preliminaries, when is this marriage to come off?"

"Ask the Pope when he'll sign the Bull," said she, tartly.

"Do you know," said I, "I think the 'Bull is a mistake;'" but she didn't take the joke, and I went on. "After that, what delays are there?"

"I suppose the settlement will take some time. You'll have to make a

suitable provision for James, to give him a handsome allowance out of the estate."

"Egad," Mrs. D.," said I, "it must be *out* of it with a vengeance, for there's no man living will advance five hundred *upon* it"

"And who wants them?" said she, angrily. You know what I mean, well enough!"

"Upon my conscience, Ma'am, I do not," said I. "You must just take pity on my stupidity and enlighten me."

"Isn't it clear, Mr. D.," said she, "that when marrying a woman with a large fortune he ought to have something himself?"

"It would be better he had; no doubt of it!"

"And if he hasn't? if what should have come to him was squandered and made away with by a life of—— No matter, I'll restrain my feelings."

"Don't, then," said I, "for I find that *mine* would like a little expansion."

It took her five minutes, and a hard struggle besides, before she could resume. She had, so to say, "taken off the gloves," Tom, and it went hard with her not to have a few "rounds" for her pains. By degrees, however, she calmed down to explain, that by a settlement on James she never contemplated actual value, but an inconvertible medium—a mere parchmentary figment to represent lands and tenements, just, in fact, what we had done before, and with such memorable success in Mary Anne's case.

"No," said I, aloud and at once—"no more of that humbug! You got me into that mess before I knew where I was. You involved me in such a maze of embarrassments that I was glad to take any, even a bad road, to get away from them. But you'll not catch me in the same scrape again; and rather than deliberately sit down to sign, seal, and deliver myself a swindler, James must die a bachelor, that's all!"

If I had told her, Tom, that I was going into Holy Orders, and intended to be Bishop of Madagascar, she could not have stared at me with more surprise.

"What's come over you?" said she, at last; "what's the meaning of all these elegant fine sentiments and scruples? Are you going, to die, Mr. D.? is it making your soul you are?"

"However unmannerly the confession, Mrs. D.," said I, "I'm afraid I'm not going to die; but the simple truth is, that I can't be a rogue in cold blood; maybe, if I had the luck to be born a M'Carthy, I might have had better ideas on the subject." This was a poke at Morgan James M'Carthy that was transported for altering a will.

She couldn't speak with passion, she was struck dumb with rage, and so, finding the enemy's artillery spiked, I opened a brisk fire at musket-range; in other words, I told her, that all we had been hitherto doing abroad rarely went beyond making ourselves ridiculous, but, that, though I liked fun, I

wouldn't push a joke as far as a felony. And, finally, I declared, in a loud and very unmistakable manner, that as I hadn't a sixpence to settle on James, I'd not go through the mockery of engrossing a lie on parchment. That I thought very meanly of the whole farce we were carrying on; and that if I was only sure I could make myself intelligible in my French, I'd just go straight to the Countess and say—I'm afraid to write the words as I spoke them, lest my spelling should be even worse than my pronunciation, for they were in French, but the meaning was—"I'm no more a Prince than I'm Primate of Ireland. I'm a small country gentleman, with an embarrassed estate and a rascally tenantry. I came abroad for economy, and it has almost ruined me. If you like my son, there he is for you, but don't flatter yourself that we possess either nobility or fortune!"

"You've done it now, you old ——," the epithet was lost in a scream, Tom, for she went off in strong hysterics, so I just rung the bell for Mary Anne, and slipped quietly away to my own room. I trust it is a good conscience does it for me, but I find that I can almost always sleep soundly when I go to bed; and it is a great blessing, Tom, for let me tell you, that after five or six-and-fifty, one's waking hours have more annoyances than pleasures about them; but the world is just like a man's mistress: he cares most for it when it is least fond of him!

I slept like a humming-top, and, indeed, there's no saying when I should have awoke, if it hadn't been for the knocking they kept up at my door.

It was Cary at last got admittance, and I had only to look in her face to see that a misfortune had befallen us.

"What is it, my dear?" said I.

"All kinds of worry and confusion, Pappy," said she, taking my hand in both of hers. "The Countess is gone."

"Gone?—how?—where?"

"Gone. Started this morning—indeed, before daybreak—I believe for Genoa; but there's no knowing, for the people have been evidently bribed to secrecy."

"What for? with what object?"

"The short of the matter is this, Pappy. She appears to have overheard some conversation—evidently intended to be of a private nature—that passed between you and Mamma last night. How she understood it does not appear, for of course you didn't talk French."

"Let that pass. Proceed."

"Whatever it was that she gathered, or fancied she gathered, one thing is certain, she immediately summoned her maid, and gave orders to pack up; post-horses were also ordered, but all with the greatest secrecy. Meanwhile she indited a short note to Mary Anne, in which, after apologising for a very unceremonious departure, she refers her to you and to Mamma for the ex-

planation, with a half-sarcastic remark, 'that family confidences had much better be conducted in a measured tone of voice, and confined to the vernacular of the speakers.' With a very formal adieu to James, whom she styles 'votre estimable frère,' the letter concludes with an assurance of deep and sincere consideration on the part of Josephine de St. A."

"What does all this mean?" exclaimed I, with a terrible misgiving, Tom, that I knew only too well how the mischief originated.

"That is exactly what I want you to explain, Pappy," said she, "for the letter distinctly refers to something within your knowledge."

"I must see the document itself," said I, cautiously, "fetch me the letter."

"James carried it off with him."

"Off with him—why, is he gone too?"

"Yes, Pappy, he started with post-horses after her—at least, so far as he could make out the road she travelled. Poor fellow! he seemed almost out of his mind when he left this."

"And your Mother, how is she?"

Cary shook her head mournfully.

Ah, Tom, I needed but the gesture to show me what was in store for me. My fertile imagination daguerreotyped a great family picture, in which I was shortly to fill a most lamentable part. My prophetic soul—as a novelist would call it—depicted me once more in the dock, arraigned for the ruin of my children, the wreck of their prospects, and the downfal of the Dodds. I fancied that even Cary would turn against me, and almost thought I could hear her muttering, "Ah, it was Papa did it all!"

While I was thus communing with myself, I received a message from Mrs. D. that she wished to see me. I take shame to myself for the confession, Tom, but I own that I felt it like an order to come up for sentence. There could be no longer any question of my guilt—my trial was over—there remained nothing but to hear the last words of the law, which seemed to say, "Kenny Dodd, you have been convicted of a great offence. By your blundering stupidity—your unbridled temper, and your gratuitous folly—you have destroyed your son's chance of worldly fortune—blasted his affections—and—and lost him four thousand a year. But your iniquity does not end even here. You have also"——As I reached this, the door opened, and Mrs. D., in her "buff coat," as I used to call a certain flannel dressing-gown that she usually donned for battle, slowly entered, followed by Mary Anne, with a whole pharmacopœia of restoratives—an "ambulance" that plainly predicted hot work before us. Resolving that our duel should have no witnesses, I turned the girls out of the room, and for the same reason do I preserve a rigid secrecy as to all the details of our engagement; enough when I say

that the sun went down upon our wrath, and it was near nightfall when we drew off our forces. Though I fought vigorously, and with the courage of despair, I couldn't get over the fact that it was my unhappy explosion in French that did all the mischief. I tried hard to make it appear that her sudden departure was rather a boon than otherwise—that our expenses were terrific, and, moreover, that, as I was determined against any fictitious settlement, her flight had only anticipated a certain catastrophe; but all these devices availed me little against my real culpability, which no casuistry could get over.

"Well, Ma'am," said I, at last, "one thing is quite clear—the Continent does not suit us. All our experience of foreign life and manners neither guides us in difficulty, nor warns us when in danger. Let us go back to where we are, at least, as wise as our neighbours— where we are familiar with the customs, and where, whatever our shortcomings, we meet with the indulgent judgment that comes of old acquaintance."

"Where's that?" said she. "I'm curious to know where is this elegant garden of Paradise?"

"Bruff, Ma'am—our own neighbourhood."

"Where we were always in hot water with every one. Were you ever out of a squabble on the Bench or at the Poor-house? Weren't you always disputing about land with the tenants, and about water with the miller? Hadn't you a row at every Assizes, and a skirmish at every road session? Bruff, indeed; it's a new thing to hear it called the Happy Valley!"

"Faith, I know I'm not Rasselas," said I.

"You're restless enough," said she, mistaking the word; "but it's your own temper that does it. No, Mr. D., if you want to go back to Ireland, I won't be selfish enough to oppose it; but as for myself, I'll never set a foot in it."

"You are determined on that?" said I.

"I am," said she.

"In that case, Ma'am," said I, "I'm only losing valuable time waiting for you to change your mind, so I'll start at once."

"A pleasant journey to you, Mr. D.," said she flouncing out of the room and leaving me the field of battle, but scarcely the victory. Now, Tom, I've too much to do and to think about to discuss the point that I know you're eager for—which of us was more in the wrong. Such debates are only casuistry from beginning to end. Besides, at all events, *my* mind is made up. I'll go back at once. The little there ever was of anything good about me is fast oozing away in this life of empty parade and vanity. Mary Anne and James are both the worse of it; who knows how long Cary willl resist its evil influence? I'll go down to Genoa, and take the Peninsular steamer

straight for Southampton. I'm a bad sailor, but it will save me a few pounds, and some patience besides, in escaping the lying and cheating scoundrels I should meet in a land journey.

To any of the neighbours, you may say that I'm coming home for a few weeks to look after the tenants; and to any whom you think would believe it, just hint that the Government has sent for me.

I conclude that I'll be very short of cash when I reach Genoa, so send me anything you can lay hands on, and believe me,

Ever your's faithfully,
KENNY JAMES DODD.

P.S.—I told you this was a cheap place. The bill has just come up, and it beats the Clarendon! It appears that his Serene Highness told them to treat us like Princes, and we must pay in the same style. I'm going to settle part of our debt by parting with our travelling-carriage, which, besides assisting the exchequer, will be a great shock to Mrs. D., and a foretaste of what she has to come down to when I'm gone. It is seldom that a man can combine the double excellence of a great financier and a great moralist!

## LETTER XXVII.

MARY ANNE DODD TO MISS DOOLAN, OF BALLYDOOLAN.

Cour de Parme, Parma.

DEAREST KITTY,—So varied have been my emotions of late, and with such whirlwind rapidity have they succeeded each other in my distracted brain, that I am really at a loss to know where I left off in my last epistle to you, and at what particular crisis in our adventures I closed my narrative. Forgive me, dearest, if I impose on you the tiresome task of listening twice to the same tale or the almost equally unpleasant duty of trying to follow me through gaps of unexplained events.

Have I told you of the Countess's departure—that most mysterious flight, which has thrown poor James into, I fear, a hopeless melancholy, and made shipwreck of his heart for ever? I feel as if I had revealed it to my dearest Kitty; my soul whispers to me that she bears her share in my sorrows, and mingles her tears with mine. Yes, dearest, she is gone! Some indiscreet revelations Papa made to Mamma in his room, would appear to have dis-

closed more of our private affairs than ought to have obtained publicity, were overheard by her, and she immediately gave orders to her servants to pack up, leaving a very vague note behind her, plainly intimating, however, that Papa might, if he pleased, satisfactorily account for the step she had taken. This, and a few almost flippant acknowledgments of our attentions, concluded an epistle that fell in the midst of us like a rocket.

If I feel deeply wounded at the slight thus shown us, and the still heavier injury inflicted on poor dear James, yet am I constrained to confess that Josephine was quite justified in what she did. Born in the very highest class, all her habits, her ways, her very instincts aristocratic, the bare thought of an alliance with a family struggling with dubious circumstances must have been too shocking! I did not ever believe that she returned James's affection; she liked him, perhaps, well enough—*that is*, well enough to marry! She deemed him her equal in rank and fortune, and in that respect regarded the match as a fair one. To learn that we were neither titled nor rich, neither great by station nor rolling in wealth, was of course to feel that she had been deceived and imposed upon, and might reasonably warrant even the half-sarcastic spirit of her farewell note.

To tell what misery this has cost us all is quite beyond me; scorned affection, blasted hopes—ambitions scattered to the winds—a glorious future annihilated! Conceive all of these that you can, and then couple them with meaner and more vulgar regrets, as to what enormous extravagance the pursuit has involved us in, the expense of a style of living that even a Prince could scarcely have maintained, and all at a little secluded capital where nobody comes, nobody lives; so that we do not reap even the secondary advantage of that notoriety for which we have to pay so dearly. Mamma and I, who think precisely alike on these subjects, are overwhelmed with misery as we reflect over what the money thus squandered would have done at Rome, Florence, or Vienna!

James is distracted, and Papa sits poring all day long over papers and accounts, by way of arranging his affairs before his death. Cary alone maintains her equanimity, for which she may thank the heartlessness of a nature insensible to all feeling.

Imagine a family circle of such ingredients! Think of us as you saw us last, even in all the darkness of Dodsborough, and you will find it difficult to believe we are the same! Yet, dearest, it might all have been different—how different! But Papa—there is no use trying to conceal it—has a talent for ruining the prospects of his family, that no individual advantages, no combination of events, however felicitous, can avail against! An absurd and most preposterous notion of being what he calls "honest and aboveboard" leads him to excesses of every kind, and condemns us to daily sorrows and humiliations. It is in vain that we tell him nobody parades his debts no more

than his infirmities; that people wear their best faces for the world, and that credit is the same principle in morals as in mercantile affairs. His reply is, "No. I'm tired of all that. I never perform a great part without longing for the time when I shall be Kenny Dodd again!"

This one confession will explain to you the hopelessness of all our efforts to rise in life, and our last resource is in the prospect of his going back to Ireland. Mamma has already proposed to accept a thousand a year for herself and me; while Cary should return with Papa to Dodsborough. It is possible that this arrangement might have been concluded ere this, but that Papa has got a relapse of his gout, and been laid up for the last eight days. He refuses to see any doctor, saying that they all drive the malady in by depletion, and has taken to drinking port wine all day long, by way of confining the attack to his foot. What is to be the success of this treatment has yet to be seen, but up to this time its only palpable effect has been to make him like a chained tiger. He roars and shouts fearfully, and has smashed all the more portable articles of furniture in the room—throwing them at the waiters. He insists, besides, on having his bill made up every night, so that instead of one grand engagement once a week, we have now a smart skirmish every evening, which usually lasts till bedtime.

For economy, too, we have gone up to the second story, and come down to a very meagre dinner. No carriage—no saddle-horses—no theatre. The courier dismissed, and a strict order at the bar against all "extras."

James lies all day a-bed; Cary plays nurse to Papa; Mamma and I sit moping beside a little miserable stove till evening, when we receive our one solitary visitor—a certain Father M'Grail—an Irish priest—who has been resident here for thirty years, and is known as the Padre Giacomo! He is a spare, thin, pock-marked little man, with a pair of downcast, I was going to say dishonest-looking, eyes, who talks with an accent as rich as though he only left Kilrush yesterday. We have only known him ten days, but he has already got an immense influence over Mamma, and induced her to read innumerable little books, and to practise a variety of small penances besides. I suspect he is rather afraid of *me*—at least we maintain towards each other a kind of armed neutrality; but Mamma will not suffer me to breathe a word against him.

It is not unlikely that he owes much of the esteem Mamma feels for him to his own deprecatory estimate of Papa, whom he pronounces to be, in many respects, almost as infamous as a Protestant. Cary he only alludes to by throwing up hands and eyes, and seeming to infer that she is irrecoverably lost.

I own to you, Kitty, I don't like him—I scarcely trust him—but it is, after all, such a resource to have any one to talk to, anything to break the dull monotony of this dreary life, that I hail his coming with pleasure, and am actually working a rochet, or an alb, or a something else for him to wear on

Saint Nicolo of Treviso's "festa"—an occasion on which the little man desires to appear with extraordinary splendour. Mamma, too, is making a canopy to hold over his honoured head; and I sincerely hope that our "œuvres meritoires" will redound to our future advantage! I am half afraid that I have shocked you with an apparent irreverence in speaking of these things, but I must confess to you, dearest Kitty, that I am occasionaly provoked beyond all bounds by the degree of influence this small saint exercises in our family, and by no means devoid of apprehension lest his dominion should become absolute. Even already he has persuaded Mamma that Papa's illness will resist all medical skill to the end of time, and will only yield to the intervention of a certain Saint Agatha of Orsaro, a newly-discovered miracle-worker, of whose fame you will doubtless hear much ere long.

To my infinite astonishment, Papa is quite converted to this opinion, and Cary tells me is most impatient to set out for Orsaro, a little village at the foot of the mountain of that name, and about thirty miles from this. As the only approach is by a bridle-path, we are to travel on mules or asses; and I look forward to the excursion, if not exactly with pleasure, with some interest. Father Giacomo—I can't call him anything else—has already written to secure rooms for us at the little inn; and we are, meanwhile, basely employed in the manufacture of certain pilgrim costumes, which are indispensable to all frequenting the holy shrine. The dress is far from unbecoming, I assure you; a loose robe of white stuff—ours are Cashmere—with wide sleeves, and a large hood lined with sky-blue; a cord of the same colour round the waist; no shoes or stockings, but light sandals, which show the foot to perfection. An amber rosary is the only ornament permitted; but the whole is charming.

Saint Agatha of Orsaro will, unquestionably, make a great noise in the world; and it will, therefore, be interesting to you to know something of her history—or, what Fra Giacomo more properly calls, her manifestation—which was in this wise: The Priest of Orsaro—a very devout and excellent man—had occasion to go into the church late at night on the eve of Saint Agatha's festival. He was anxious, I believe, to see that all the decorations to do honour to the day were in proper order, and, taking a lamp from the sacristy, he walked down the aisle till he came to the shrine, where the saint's image stood. He knelt for a moment to address her in prayer, when, with a sudden sneeze, she extinguished his light, and left him fainting and in darkness on the floor of the church. In this fashion was he discovered the following morning, when, after coming to himself, he made the revelation I have just given you. Since that she has been known to sneeze three times, and on each occasion a miracle has followed. The fame of this wonderful occurrence has now traversed Italy, and will doubtless soon extend to the

faithful in every part of Europe. Orsaro is becoming crowded with penitents; among whom I am gratified to see the names of many of the English aristocracy; and it has become quite a fashionable thing to pass a week or ten days there.

Now, dearest Kitty, from you, with whom I have no concealments, I will not disguise the confession that I look forward to this excursion with considerable hope and expectation. You cannot but have perceived latterly how our faith, instead of being, as it once was, the symbol of low birth and ignoble connexions, has become the very bond of aristocratic society. The church has become the salon wherein we make our most valued acquaintances; and devout observances are equivalent to letters of introduction. If I wanted a proof of this, I'd give it in the number of those who have become converts to our religion, from the manifest social benefits the change of faith has conferred. How otherwise would third and fourth-rate Protestants obtain access to Princely soirées and Ducal receptions? By what other road could they arrive at recognition in the society of Rome and Naples, frequent Cardinal's levees, and be even seen lounging in the ante-chambers of the Vatican?

Hence it is clear that the true faith has its benefits in *this* world also, and that piety is a passport to high places even on earth. I have no doubt, if we manage properly, our sojourn at Orsaro may be made very profitable, and that, even without miracles, the excursion may pay us well.

I have been interrupted by a message to attend Mamma in her own room—a summons I rightly guessed to imply something of importance. Only fancy, Kitty, it was a letter which had arrived addressed to Papa—but of course not given to him to read in his present highly agitated state—from Captain Morris, with a proposal for Caroline!

He very properly sets out by acknowledging the great difference of age between them, but he might certainly have added something as to the discrepancy between their stations. He talks, too, of his small means, "sufficient for those who can limit their ambitions and wants within a narrow circle"—I wonder who they are?—and professes a deal of that cold kind of respectful love which all old men affect to think a woman ought to feel flattered by. In fact, the whole reads far more like a law paper than a love-letter, and is rather a rough draft of an Act of Parliament against celibacy, than a proposal for a pretty girl!

Mamma had shown the letter to Fra Giacomo before I entered, and I had very little trouble to guess the effect produced by his counsels. The Captain, as a heretic, was at once denounced by him; and the little man grew actually enthusiastic in inveighing against the insulting presumption of the offer. He insisted on a peremptory, flat rejection of the proposal, without any reference whatever to Papa. He said that to hesitate in such a question was in itself a

sin; and he even hinted that he wasn't quite sure what reception Saint Agatha might vouchsafe us, after so much of intercourse with an outcast and a disbeliever.

This last argument was decisive, and I accordingly sat down and wrote, in Mamma's name, a very stiff acknowledgment of the receipt of his letter, and an equally cold refusal of the honour it tendered for our acceptance. We all agreed that Cary should hear nothing whatever of the matter, but, as Fra Giacomo said, "we'd keep the disgrace for our own hearts."

I own to you, Kitty, that if the religious question could be got over, I do not think the thing so inadmissible. Cary is evidently not destined to advance our family interests: had she even the capacity, she lacks the ambition. Her tastes are humble, common-place, and—shall I say it?—vulgar.

It gives her no pleasure to move in high society, and she esteems the stupid humdrum of domestic life as the very supreme of happiness. With such tastes this old Captain—he is five-and-thirty at least—would perhaps have suited her perfectly, and his intolerable mother been quite a companion. Their small fortune, too, would have consigned them to some cheap, out-of-the-way place, where we should not have met—and, in fact, the arrangement might have combined a very fair share of advantages. Fra G., however, had decided the matter on higher grounds, and there is no more to be said about it.

There is another letter come by this post, too, from Lord George, dearest! He is to arrive to-night, if he can get horses. He is full of some wonderful tournament about to be held at Genoa—a spectacle to be given by the city to the King, which is to attract all the world thither; and Lord G. writes to say that we haven't a moment to lose in securing accommodation at the hotel. Little suspecting the frame of mind his communication is to find us in, and that, in place of doughty deeds and chivalrous exploits, our thoughts are turned to fastings, mortifications, and whipcord! Oh, how I shudder at the ridicule with which he will assail us, and tremble for my own constancy under the raillery he will shower on us! I never dreaded his coming before, and would give worlds now that anything could prevent his arrival.

How reconcile his presence with that of Fra Giacomo? How protect the Priest from the overt quizzings of my Lord? and how rescue his Lordship from the secret machinations of the "Father?" are difficulties that I know not how to face. Mamma, besides, is now so totally under priestly guidance, that she would sacrifice the whole Peerage for a shaving of a saint's shin-bone! There will not be even time left me to concert measures with Lord G. The moment he enters the house he'll see the "altered temper of our ways" in a thousand instances. Relics, missals, beads, and rosaries, have replaced Gavarni's etchings, *Punch*, and the *Illustration*. Charms and amulets blessed by Popes occupy the places of cigar-holders, pipe-sticks, and gutta-

percha drolleries. The "Stabat Mater" has usurped the seat of "Casta Diva" on the piano, and a number of other unmistakable signs point to our reformed condition.

I hear post-horses approaching—they come nearer and nearer! Yes, Kitty, it must be—it is he! James has met him—they are already on the stairs how they laugh! James must be telling him everything. I knew he would Another burst of that unfeeling laughter! They are at the door. Good-by!

Mount Orsaro, "La Pace."

Here we are, dearest, at the end of our pilgrimage. Such a delightful excursion I never remember to have taken. I told you all about my fears of Lord George. Would that I had never written the ungracious lines!—never so foully wronged him! Instead of the levity I apprehended, he is actually reverential I might say, devout! The moment he reached Parma, he ordered a dress to be made for him exactly like James's, and decided immediately on accompanying us. Fra Giacomo, I need scarcely observe, was in ecstasies. The prospect of such a noble convert would be an immense piece of success, and he did not hesitate to avow, would materially advance his own interests at Rome.

As for the journey, Kitty, I have no words to describe the scenery through which we travelled: deep glens between lofty mountains, wooded to the very summits with cork and chesnut-trees, over which, towering aloft, were seen the peaks of the great Apennines, glistening in snow, or golden in the glow of sunset. Wending along through these our little procession went, in itself no unpicturesque feature, for we were obliged to advance in single file along the narrow pathway, and thus our mules, with their scarlet trappings, and tasseled bridles, and our floating costumes, made up an effect which will remain painted on my heart for ever. In reality, I made a sketch of the scene; but Lord George, who for the convenience of talking to me always rode with his face to the mule's tail, made me laugh so often, that my drawing is quite spoiled.

At last, we arrived at the little inn called "La Pace"—how beautifully it sounds, dearest! and really stands so, too, beside a gushing mountain-stream and perfectly embowered in olives. We could only obtain two rooms, however; one adjoining the kitchen for Papa and Mamma; the other, under the tiles, for Cary and myself. Fra Giacomo quarters himself on the priest of the village; and Lord George and James are what the Italians call "*a spasso.*" Betty Cobb is furious at being consigned to the kitchen, in company with some thirty others, many of whom, I may remark, are English people of rank and condition. In fact, dearest, the whole place is so crowded, that a miserable room, in all its native dirt and disgust, costs the price of a

splendid apartment in Paris. Many of the first people of Europe are here: Ministers, Ambassadors, Generals; and an English Earl also, who is getting a drawing made of the shrine and the Virgin, and intends sending a narrative of her miracles to the *Tablet*. You have no idea, my dearest Kitty, of the tone of affectionate kindness and cordiality inspired by such a scene. Dukes, Princes, even Royalties, accost you as their equals. As Fra G. says, "The holy influences level distinctions." The Duke of San Pietrino placed his own cushion for Mamma to kneel on yesterday. The Graf von Dummerslungen gave me a relic to kiss as I passed this morning. Lord Tollington, one of the proudest Peers in England, stopped to ask Papa how he was, and regretted we had not arrived last Saturday, when the Virgin sneezed twice!

As we begin our Novena to-morrow, I shall probably not have a moment to continue this rambling epistle; but you may confidently trust that my first thoughts, when again at liberty, shall be given to you. Till then, darling Kitty, believe me

Your devoted and ever affectionate
MARY ANNE DODD.

P.S.—More arrivals, Kitty—three carriages and eleven donkeys! Where they are to put up, I can't conceive. Lord G. says, "It's as full as the 'Diggins,' and quite as dear." The excitement and novelty of the whole are charming!

## LETTER XXVIII.

MRS. DODD TO MRS. MARY GALLAGHER, DODSBOROUGH.

Orsaro. Feast of Saint Gingo

MY DEAR MOLLY,—The Earl of Guzeberry, that leaves this to-day for England, kindly offers to take charge of my letters to you; and so I write "Favoured by his Lordship" on the outside, just that you may show the neighbours, and teach them Davises the respect they ought to show us, if it's ever our misfortune to meet.

The noble Lord was here doing his penances with us for the last three weeks, and is now my most intimate friend on earth. He's the kindest-hearted creature I ever met, and always doing good works, of one sort or other; and whenever not sticking nails in his own flesh, or pulling hairs out of his beard or eyelashes, always ready to chastise a friend!

We came here to see the wonderful Virgin of Orsaro, and beg her intercession for us all, but more especially for K. I., whose temper proves clearly that there's what Father James calls a "possession of him;" that is to say, "he has devils inside of him." The whole account of the saint herself—her first manifestation and miraculous doings—you'll find in the little volume that accompanies this, written, as you will see, by your humble servant. Lord G. gave me every assistance in his power; and, indeed, but for him and Father James, it might have taken years to finish it; for I must tell you, Molly, bad as Berlin-work is, it's nothing compared to writing a book; for, when you have the wool and the frame, it's only stitching it in, but with a book you have to arrange your thoughts, and then put them down; after that, there's the grammar to be minded, and the spelling, and the stops; and many times, where you think it's only a comma, you have come to your full period! I assure you I went through more with that book—little as it is—than in all my "observances," some of them very severe ones. First of all, we had to be so particular about the Miracles, knowing well what Protestant bigotry would do when the account came out. We had to give names, and dates, and places, with witnesses to substantiate, and all that could corroborate the facts. Then, we had a difficulty of another kind—how to call the Virgin. You may remember how those Exeter Hall wretches spoke of Our Lady of Rimini—as the "Winking Virgin." We couldn't say sneezing after that, so we just called her "La Madonna dei Sospiri"—"Our Lady of Sighs." To be sure, we can't get the people here to adopt this title—but that's no consequence as regards England.

By the time the volume reaches you, all Europe will be ringing with the wonderful tidings; for there are three bishops here, and they have all signed the "Mémoire," recommending special services in honour of the Virgin, and strongly urging a subscription to build a suitable shrine for her in this her native village.

You have no idea, dear Molly, of what a blessed frame of mind these spiritual duties have enabled me to enjoy. How peaceful is my spirit!—how humble my heart! I turn my thoughts away from earth as easily as I could renounce rope-dancing; and when I sit of an evening, in a state of what Lord Gozeberry calls "beatitude," K. I. might have the cholera without my caring for it.

The season is now far advanced, however, and, to my infinite grief, we must leave this holy spot, where we have made a numerous and most valuable acquaintance; for, besides several of the first people of England, we have formed intimacy with the Duchessa di Sangue Nero, first lady to the Queen of Naples; the Marquesa di Villa Guasta, a great leader of fashion in Turin; the "Noncio" at the Court of Modena; and a variety of distin-

guished Florentines and Romans, who all assure us that our devotions are the best passports for admission in all the select houses of Italy.

Mary Anne predicts a brilliant winter before us, and even Cary is all delight at the prospect of Picture Galleries and works of art. Isn't it paying the Protestants off for their insulting treatment of us at home, Molly, to see all the honour and respect we receive abroad? The tables are completely turned, my dear; for not one of them ever gets his nose into the really high society of this country, while we are welcomed to it with open arms. But, if there's anything sure to get you well received in the first houses, it is having a convert of rank in your train. To be the means of bringing a Lord over to the true fold, is to be taken up at once by Cardinals and Princes of all kinds.

As Mary Anne says, "Let us only induce Lord George to enter the Catholic Church, and our fortune is made" And oh, Molly, putting all the pomps and vanities of this world aside, never heeding the grandeur of this life, nor caring what man may do to us, isn't it an elegant reflection to save one poor creature from the dreadful road of destruction and ruin! I'm sure it would be the happiest day of my life when I could read in the *Tablet*, "We have great satisfaction in announcing to our readers that Lord George Tiverton, Member for"—I forget where -"and son of the Marquis"—I forget whom—"yesterday renounced the errors of the Protestant Church to embrace those of the Church of Rome."

Maybe, now, you'd like to hear something about ourselves; but I've little to tell that is either pleasant or entertaining. You know—or, at least, you will know from Kitty Doolan—the way K. I. destroyed poor James, and lost him a beautiful creature and four thousand a year. That was a blow there's no getting over; and, indeed, I'd have sunk under it, if it wasn't for Father James, and the consolations he has been able to give me. There was an offer came for Caroline. Captain Morris, that you've heard me speak of, wrote and proposed, which I opened during K. I.'s illness, and sent him a flat refusal, Molly, with a bit of advice in the end, about keeping in his own rank of life, and marrying into his own creed.

Maybe I mightn't have been so stout about rejecting him, for it's the hardest thing in life to marry a daughter now-a-days, but that Father Giacomo said his Holiness would never forgive me for taking a heretic into the family; and that it was one of the nine deadly sins. You may perceive from this, that Father G. is of great use to me when I need advice and guidance, and indeed I consulted him as to whether I ought to separate from K. I., or not. There are cases of conscience, he tells me, and cases of convenience. The first are matters for the Cardinals and the Holy College! but the others, any ordinary priest can settle; and this is one of them. "Don't leave him,"

says he, "for your means of doing good will only be more limited; and as to your trials, take out some of your mortifications that way; and above all, don't be too lenient to *him*." Ay, Molly, he saw my weak point, do what I would to hide it: he knew my failing was an easy disposition, and a patient, submissive turn of mind. But I'll do my endeavour to conquer it, if it was only for the poor children's sake; for I know he'd marry again; and I sometimes suspect I've hit the one he has his eyes on.

On Friday next, we are to leave this for Genoa. It's the end of our Novena, and we wouldn't have time for another before the snow sets in; for though we're in Italy, Molly, the mountains all round us are tipped with snow, and it's as cold now, when you're in the shade, as I ever felt it in Ireland. It's a great Tournament at Genoa is taking us there. There's to be the King of Saxony, and the King of Bohemia, too, I believe: for whenever you begin to live in fashionable life, you must run after royal people from place to place, be seen wherever they are, and be quite satisfied whenever your name is put down among the "distinguished company."

I was near forgetting that I want you to get Father John to have my little book read by the children in our National School; for, as K. I. is the patron, we have of course the right. At all events, *I'll* withdraw if they refuse; and they can't accuse me of illiberality or bigotry; for I never said a word against the taking away the Bible. Let them just remember *that!*

Lord Guzeberry is just going, so that I have only time to seal, and sign myself as ever yours,

JEMIMA DODD.

I send you two dozen of the tracts, to distribute among our friends. The one bound in red silk is for Dean O'Dowd, "with the author's devotions and duties."

## LETTER XXIX.

BETTY COBB TO MISTRESS SHUSAN O'SHEA.

Mount Orsaro.

My dear Shusan,—It's five months and two days since I wrote to you last, and it's like five years in regard to the way time has worn and distressed me. The Mistress tould Mrs. Gallagher how I was deserted by that deceatfull bliguard, taking off with him my peace of mind, two petticoats, and a blue cloth cloak, that I thought would last me for life! so that I needn't go over my miseries again to yourself. We heard since that he had another wife in Switzerland, that's to say two more wandering about, so that the Master says, if we ever meet him, we can hang him for "bigotry." And, to tell you the truth, Shusy, I feel as if it would be a great relief to me to do it! if it was only to save other craytures from the same feat that he did to your poor friend Betty Cobb; besides that, until something of the kind is done, I can't enter the holy state again with any other deceaver.

Such a life as we're leadin', Shusy, at one minute all eatin' and drinkin' and caressin' from morning till night; at another, my dear, it's all fastin' and mortification, for the Mistress has no modderation at all; but, as the Master says, she's always in her extremities! If ye seen the dress of her last week, she was Satan from head to foot, and now she's, by way of a saint, in white Cashmar, with a little scurge at her waist, and hard pegs in her shoes!

We have nothin' to eat but roots, like the beasts of the field, and them, too, mostly raw! That's to make us good soldiers of the Church, Father James says; but in my heart and soul, Shusy, I'm sick of the regiment. Shure, when we've a station in Ireland, it only lasts a day or two at most; and if your knees is sore with the penance, shure you have the satisfaction of the pleasant evenings after; with maybe a dance, or, at all events, tellin' stories over a jug of punch, but here it's prayers and stripes, stripes and offices, starvation and more stripes, till, savin' your presence, I never sit down without a screech!

Why we came here I don't know; the Mistress says it was to cure the Master; but didn't I hear her tell him a thousand times that the bad drop was in him, and he'd never be better to his dyin' day? so that it can't be for that. Sometimes I think it's to get Mary Anne married, and they want

Saint Agatha to help them; but faith, Shusy, one sinner is worth two saints for the like of that. Lord George tould me in confidence—the other day it was—that the Mistress wanted an increase to her family. Faith, you may well open your eyes, my dear, but them's his words! And tho' I didn't believe him at first, I'm more persuaded of it now, that I see how she's goin' on.

If the Master only suspected it, he'd be off to-morrow, for he's always groanin' and moanin' over the expense of the family; and between you and me, I believe I ought to go and tell him. Maybe you'd give me advice what to do, for it's a nice point.

You wouldn't know Paddy Byrne, how much he's grown, and the wonderful whiskers he has all over his face; but he's as bowld as brass, and has the impedince of the divil in him. He never ceases tormentin' me about Taddy, and says I ought to take out a few florins in curses on him, just as if I couldn't do it cheaper myself than payin' a priest for it. As for Paddy himself—do what the Mistress will—she can get no good of him, in regard to his duties. He does all his stations on his knees, to be sure, but with a cigar in his mouth; and when he comes to the holy well, it's a pull at a dram bottle he takes instead of the blessed water. I wondered myself at his givin' a crown piece to the Virgin on Tuesday last, but he soon showed me what he was at, by sayin': "If she doesn't get my wages riz for that, the divil receave the farthin' she'll ever receave of mine again!"

After all, Shusy, it's an elegant sight to see all them great people that thinks so much of themselves, crawling about on their hands and knees, kissin' a reliet here, huggin' a stone there, just as much frightened about the way the saint looks at them as one of us! It does one's heart good to know that for all their fine livin' and fine clothes, ould Nick has the same hould of them that he has of you and me!

I had a great deal to tell you about the family and their goin's on, but I must conclude in haste, for tho' its only five o'clock, there's the bell ringing for mattins, and I have a station to take before first mass. I suppose it's part of my mortifications, but the Mistress and Mary Anne never gives me a stitch of clothes till they're spoiled; and I'm drivin to my wits' end, tearin' and destroyin' things in such a way as not to ruin them when they come to me! Miss Caroline never has a gown much better than my own; and, indeed, she said the other day, "When I want to be smart, Betty, you must lend me your black bombaseen."

There's the Mistress gone out already, so no more from

Your sincear friend,

BETTY COBB.

I think Lord G. is right about the Mistress. The saints forgive her, at her time of life! More in my next.

## LETTER XXX.

JAMES DODD TO ROBERT DOOLAN, ESQ., TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.

The Inn, Orsaro.

MY DEAR BOB,—This must be a very brief epistle, since, amongst other reasons, the sheet of letter-paper costs me a florin, and I shall have to pay three more for a messenger to convey it to the post-town, a distance of as many miles off. To explain these scarce credible facts, I must tell you that we are at a little village called Orsaro, in the midst of a wild mountain country, whither we have come to perform penances, say prayers, and enact other devotions at the shrine of a certain St. Agatha, who, some time last autumn, took to working miracles down here, and consequently attracting all the faithful who had nothing to do with themselves before Carnival.

My excellent Mother it was, who, in an access of devotion, devised the excursion; and the Governor, hearing that the locality was a barbarous one, and the regimen a strict fast, fancied, of course, it would be a most economical dodge, at once agreed; but, by Jove! the saving is a delusion and a snare. Two miserable rooms, dirty and ill furnished, cost forty francs a day; bad coffee and black bread for breakfast, are supplied at four francs a head; dinner if by such a name one would designate a starved kid stewed in garlic, or a boiled hedgehog with chicory sauce—ten francs each; sour wine at the price of Château Lafitte; and a seat in the sanctuary, to see the Virgin, four times as dear as a stall at the Italian Opera. Exorbitant as all these charges are, we are gravely assured that they will be doubled whenever the Virgin sneezes again, that being the manifestation, as they call it, by which she displays her satisfaction at our presence here. I do not fancy talking irreverently of these things, Bob, but I own to you I am ineffably shocked at the gross impositions innkeepers, postmasters, donkey-owners, and others practise by trading on the devotional feelings and pious aspirations of weak but worthy people. I say nothing of the priests themselves, they may or may not believe all these miraculous occurrences. One thing, however, is clear, they make every opportunity of judging of them so costly that only a rich man can afford himself the luxury, so that you and I, and a hundred others like us, may either succumb or scoff, as we please, without any means of correcting our convictions. One inevitable result ensues from this. There are two camps: the Faithful, who believe everything, and are cheated by

every imaginable device of mock relics and made-up miracles; and the Unbelieving, who actually rush into ostentatious vice, to show their dislike to hypocrisy! Thus, this little dirty village, swarming with priests, and resounding with the tramp of processions, is a den of every kind of dissipation. The rattle of the dice-box mingles with the nasal chantings of the tonsured monks, and the wild orgies of a drinking party blend with the strains of the organ! If men be not religiously-minded, the contact with the Church seems to make demons of them. How otherwise interpret the scoff and mockery that unceasingly go forward against priests and priestcraft in a little community, as it were, separated for acts of piety and devotion?

That we live in a most believing age is palpable, by the fact that this place swarms with men distinguished in every court and camp in Europe. Crafty Ministers, artful Diplomatists, keen old Generals, versed in every wile and stratagem, come here, as it were, to divest themselves of all their long-practised acuteness, and give in their adhesion to the most astounding and incoherent revelations. I cannot bring myself to suppose these men rogues and hypocrites, and yet I have nearly as much difficulty to believe them dupes! What have become of those sharp perceptive powers, that clever insight into motives, and the almost unerring judgment they could exhibit in any question of politics or war? It cannot surely be that they who have measured themselves with the first capacities of the world, dread to enter the lists against some half-informed and narrow-minded village curate? or is it that there lurks in every human heart some one spot, a refuge as it were for credulity, which even the craftiest cannot exclude? You are far better suited than I to canvass such a question, my dear Bob. I only throw it out for your consideration, without any pretension to solve it myself.

My Father, you are well aware, is too good a churchman to suffer a syllable to escape his lips which might be construed into discredit of the faith; but I can plainly see that he skulks his penances, and shifts off any observance that does not harmonise with his comfort. At the same time, he strongly insists that the fastings and other privations enjoined, are an admirable system to counteract the effect of that voluptuous life practised in almost every capital of Europe. As he shrewdly remarked, "this place was like Groeffenberg—you might not be restored by the water-cure, but you were sure to be benefited by early hours, healthful exercise, and a light diet." This, you may perceive, is a very modified approval of the miracles.

I have dwelt so long on this theme, that I have only left myself what Mary Anne calls the selvage of my paper, for anything else. Nor is it pleasant to me, Bob, to tell you that I am low-spirited and down-hearted. A month ago, life was opening before me with every prospect of happiness and enjoyment. A lovely creature, gifted and graceful, of the very highest rank and fortune, was to have been mine. She was actually domesticated with us, and

only waiting for the day which should unite our destinies for ever, when one night—I can scarcely go on—I know not how either to convey to you what is *half* shrouded in mystery, and should be, perhaps, *all* concealed in shame; but, somehow, my Father contrived to talk so of our family affairs—our debts, our difficulties, and what not—that Josephine overheard everything, and shocked, possibly, more at our duplicity than at our narrow fortune, she hurried away at midnight, leaving a few cold lines of farewell behind her, and has never been seen or heard of since.

I set out after her to Milan; thence to Bologna, where I thought I had traces of her. From that I went to Rimini, and on a false scent down to Ancona. I got into a slight row there with the police, and was obliged to retrace my steps, and arrived at Parma, after three weeks' incessant travelling, heart-broken and defeated.

That I shall ever rally—that I shall ever take any real interest in life again, is totally out of the question. Such an opportunity of fortune as this rarely occurs to any one once in life; none are lucky enough to meet it a second time. The Governor, too, instead of feeling, as he ought, that he has been the cause of my ruin, continues to pester me about the indolent way I spend my life, and inveighs against even the little dissipations that I endeavour to drown my sorrows by indulging in. It's all very well to talk about active employment, useful pursuits, and so forth; but a man ought to have his mind at ease, and his heart free from care, for all these, as I told the Governor yesterday. When a fellow has got such a "stunner" as I have had lately, London porter and a weed are his only solace. Even Tiverton's society is distasteful, he has such a confoundedly flippant way of treating one.

I'm thinking seriously of emigrating, and wish you could give me any useful hints on the subject. Tiverton knows a fellow out there, who was in the same regiment with himself—a baronet, I believe—and he's doing a capital stroke of work with a light four-in-hand team that he drives, I think, between San Francisco and Geelong, but don't trust me too far in the geography; he takes the diggers at eight pounds a head, and extra for the "swag." Now that is precisely the thing to suit me; I can tool a coach as well as most fellows; and as long as one keeps on the box they don't feel it like coming down in the world!

I half suspect Tiverton would come out too. At least, he seems very sick of England, as everybody must be that hasn't ten thousand a year and a good house in Belgravia.

I don't know whither we go from this, and, except in the hope of hearing from you, I could almost add, care as little. The Governor has got so much better from the good air and the regimen, that he is now anxious to be off; while my Mother, attributing his recovery to the saint's interference, wants

another "Novena." Mary Anne likes the place too, and Cary, who sketches all day long, seems to enjoy it. How the decision is to come, is, therefore, not easy to foresee. Meanwhile, whether *here* or *there*,

Believe me your attached friend,

JAMES DODD.

I open this to say that we are "booked" for another fortnight here. My Mother went to consult the Virgin about going away last night, and she—that is the saint—gave such a sneeze, that my Mother fainted, and was carried home insensible. The worst of all this is, that Father Giacomo—our guide in spirituals—insists on my Mother's publishing a little tract on her experiences; and the women are now hard at work with pen and ink at a small volume to be called "St. Agatha of Orsaro," by Jemima D——. They have offered half a florin apiece for good miracles, but they are pouring in so fast they'll have to reduce the tariff. Tiverton recommends them to ask thirteen to the dozen.

The Governor is furious at this authorship, which will cost some five-and-twenty pounds at the least!

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## LETTER XXXI.

### MRS. DODD TO MRS. MARY GALLAGHER.

Hôtel Feder, Genoa.

My dear Molly,—It's little that piety and holy living assists us in this wicked world, as you'll allow, when I tell you that after all my penances, my mortifications, and my self-abstainings, instead of enjoyment and pleasure, as I might reasonably look for in this place, I never knew real misery and shame till I came here. I wouldn't believe anybody that said people was always as bad as they are now! Sure, if they were, why wouldn't we be prepared for their baseness and iniquity? Why would we be deceived and cheated at every hand's turn? It's all balderdash to pretend it, Molly. The world must be coming to an end, for this plain reason, that it's morally impossible it can be more corrupt, more false, and more vicious than it is.

I'm trying these three days to open my heart to you. I've taken ether, and salts, and neumonia—I think the man called it—by the spoonfuls, just to steady my nerves, and give me strength to tell you my afflictions; and now



I'll just begin, and if my tears doesn't blot out the ink, I'll reveal my sorrows, and open my breast before you.

We left that blessed village of Orsaro two days after I wrote to you by the Earl of Guzeberry, and came on here, by easy stages, as we were obliged to ride mules for more than half the way. Our journey was of course fatiguing, but unattended by any other inconvenience than K. I.'s usual temper about the food, the beds, and the hotel charges as we came along. He wouldn't fast, nor do a single penance on the road; nor would he join in chanting a Litany with Father James, but threatened to sing "Nora Chrina," if we didn't stop. And though Lord George was greatly shocked, James was just as bad as his father. Father Giacomo kept whispering to me from time to time, "We'll come to grief for this. We'll have to pay for all this impiety, Mrs. D.;" till at last he got my nerves in such a state, that I thought we'd be swept away at every blast of wind from the mountains, or carried down by every torrent that crossed the road. I couldn't pass a bridge without screeching; and as to fording a stream, it was an attack of hysterics. These of course delayed us greatly, and it was a good day when we got over eight miles. For all that, the girls seemed to like it. Cary had her sketch-book always open, and Mary Anne used to go fishing with Lord G. and James, and contrived, as she said, to make the time pass pleasantly enough.

I saw very little of K. I., for I was always at some devotional exercise, and indeed, I was right glad of it, for his chief amusement was getting Father James into an argument, and teasing and insulting him so, that I only wondered why he didn't leave us at once and for ever. He never ceased, too, gibing and jeering about the miracles of Orsaro; and one night, when he had got quite beyond all bounds, laughing at Father G., he told him, "Faith," says he, "you're the most credulous man ever I met in my life; for it seems to me that you can believe anything but the Christian religion."

From that moment, Father G. only shook his hands at him, and wouldn't discourse.

This is the way we got to Genoa, where, because we arrived at night, they kept us waiting outside the gates of the town till the commandant of the fortress had examined our passports; K. I. all the while abusing the authorities, and blackguarding the governor in a way that would have cost us dear, if it wasn't that nobody could understand his Italian.

That wasn't all, for when we got to the hotel, they said that all the apartments had been taken before Lord George's letter arrived, and that there wasn't a room nor a pantry to be had in the whole city at any price. In fact, an English family had just gone off in despair to Chiavari, for even the ships in the harbour were filled with strangers, and the "steam dredge" was fitted up like an hotel! K. I. took down the list of visitors, to see if he could find a friend or an acquaintance amongst them, but, though there were plenty of

English, we knew none of them; and as for Lord G., though he was acquainted with nearly all the titled people, they were always relatives or connexions with whom he wasn't "on terms." While we sat thus at the door, holding our council of war, with sleepy waiters and a sulky porter, a gentleman passed in, and went by us, up the stairs, before we could see his face. The landlord, who lighted him all the way himself, showed that he was a person of some consequence. K. I. had just time to learn that he was "No. 4, the grand apartment on the first floor, towards the sea," which was all they knew; when the landlord came down, smiling and smirking, to say, that the occupant of No. 4 felt much pleasure in putting half his suite of rooms at our disposal, and hoped we might not decline his offer.

"Who is it?—who is he?" cried we all at once; but the landlord made such a mess of the English name, that we were obliged to wait till we could read it in the Strangers' Book. Meanwhile, we lost not a second in installing ourselves in what I must call a most princely apartment, with mirrors on all sides, fine pictures, china, and carved furniture, giving the rooms the air of a palace. There was a fine fire in the great drawing-room, and the table was littered with English newspapers and magazines, which proved that he had just left the place for us as he was himself occupying it.

"Now for our great Unknown," said Lord George, opening the Strangers' Book, and running his eye down the list. There was Milor Hubbs and Miladi, Baron This, Count That, the "Vescovo" di Kilmore, with the "Vescova" and five "Vescovini,"—that meant the Bishop and his wife, and the five small little Bishops—which made us laugh. And at last we came down to "No. 4, Grand Suite," Sir Morris Penrhyn, Bt., not a word more.

"There is a swell of that name that owns any amount of slate quarries down near Holyhead, I think," said Lord George. "Do you happen to know him?"

"No," was chorused by all present.

"Oh! every one knows his place. It's one of the show things of the neighbourhood. How is this they call it—Pwlldmmolly Castle?—that's the name, at least so far as human lips can approach it. At all events, he has nigh fifteen thousand a year, and can afford the annoyance of a consonant more or less."

"Any relative of your Lordship's?" asked K. I.

"Don't exactly remember; but, if so, we never acknowledged him. Can't afford Welsh cousinships!"

"He's a right civil fellow, at all events," said K. I., "and here's his health;" for at that moment the waiter entered with the supper, and we all sat down in far better spirits than we had expected to enjoy half an hour back. We soon forgot all about our unknown benefactor; and, indeed, we had enough of our own concerns to engross our attention, for there were

places to be secured for the Tournament, and the other great sights; for, with all the frailty of our poor natures, there we were, as hot after the vanities and pleasures of this world as if we had never done a "Novena" nor a penance in our lives!

When I went to my room, Mary Anne and I had a long conversation about the stranger, whom she was fully persuaded was a connexion of Lord G.'s, and had shown us this attention solely on his account. "I can perceive," said she, "from his haughty manner, that he doesn't like to acknowledge the relationship, nor be in any way bound by the tie of an obligation. His pride is the only sentiment he can never subdue! A bad 'look-out' for *me*, perhaps, Mamma," said she, laughing; "but we'll see hereafter." And with this she wished me good night.

The next morning our troubles began, and early too, for Father James, not making any allowance for the different life one must lead in a great city from what one follows in a little out-of-the-way place amidst mountains, expected me to go up to a chapel two miles away and hear matins, and be down at mid day mass in the town, and then had a whole afternoon's work at the convent arranged for us, and was met by Lord George and James with a decided, and, indeed, almost rude opposition. The discussion lasted till late in the morning, and might, perhaps, have gone on further, when K. I., who was reading his *Galignani*, screamed out, "By the great O'Shea!"—a favourite exclamation of his—"here's a bit of news. Listen to this, Gentles, all of you: 'By the demise of Sir Walter Prichard Penrhyn, of'—I must give up the castle—'the ancient title and large estates of the family descend to a sister's son, Captain George Morris, who formerly served in the —th Foot, but retired from the army about a year since, to reside on the Continent. The present Baronet, who will take the name of Penrhyn, will be, by this accession of fortune, the richest landed proprietor in the Principality, and may, if he please it, exercise a very powerful interest in the political world. We are, of course, ignorant of his future intentions, but we share in the generally expressed wish of all classes here, that the ancient seat of his ancestors may not be left unoccupied, or only tenanted by those engaged in exhibiting to strangers its varied treasures in art, and its unrivalled curiosities in antiquarian lore.—*Welsh Herald*.' There's the explanation of the civility we met with last night; that clears up the whole mystery, but, at the same time, leaves another riddle unsolved. Why didn't he speak to us on the stairs? Could it be that he did not recognise us?"

Oh, Molly! I nearly fainted while he was speaking. I was afraid of my life he'd look at me, and see by my changed colour what was agitating me; for only think of what it was I had done—just gone and refused fifteen thousand a year, and for the least marriageable of the two girls, since, I needn't say that for one man that fancies Cary, there's forty admires Mary

Anne—and a Baronetcy! She'd have been my Lady, just as much as any in the Peerage. I believe in my heart I couldn't have kept the confession in, if it hadn't been that Mary Anne took my arm and led me away. Father G. followed us out of the room, and began: "Isn't it a real blessing from the Virgin on ye," said he, "that you rejected that heretic before temptation assailed ye?" But I stopped him, Molly; and at once, too! I told him it was all his own stupid bigotry got us into the scrape. "What has religion to do with it?" said I. "Can't a heretic spend fifteen thousand a year; and sure if his wife can't live with him, can't she claim Any-money, as they call it?"

"I hope and trust," said he, "that your backsliding won't bring a judgment on ye."

And so I turned away from him, Molly, for you may remark that there's nothing as narrow-minded as a priest when he talks of worldly matters.

Though we had enough on our minds the whole day about getting places for the Tournament, the thought of Morris never left my head; and I knew, besides, that I'd never have another day's peace with K. I. as long as I lived, if he came to find out that I refused him. I thought of twenty ways to repair the breach: that I'd write to him, or make Mary Anne write - or get James to call and see him. Then it occurred to me, if we should make out that Cary was dying for love of him, and it was to save our child that we condescended to change our mind. Mary Anne, however, overruled me in everything, saying: "Rely upon it, Mamma, we'll have him yet. If he was a very young man there would be no chance for us, but he is five or six-and-thirty, and he'll not change, now! For a few months or so, he'll try to bully himself into the notion of forgetting her, but you'll see he'll come round at last; and if he should not, then it will be quite time enough to see whether we ought to pique his jealousy or awaken his compassion."

She said much more in the same strain, and brought me round completely to her own views. "Above all," said she, "don't let Father James influence you; for though it's all right and proper to consult him about the next world, he knows no more than a child about the affairs of this one." So we agreed, Molly, that we'd just wait and see, of course keeping K. I. blind all the time to what we were doing.

The Games and the Circus, and all the wonderful sights that we were to behold, drove everything else out of my head, for every moment Lord George was rushing in with some new piece of intelligence about some astonishing giant, or some beautiful creature, so that we hadn't a moment to think of anything.

It was the hardest thing in life to get places at all. The pit was taken up with Dukes, and Counts, and Barons, and the boxes rose to twenty-five Napoleons apiece, and even at that price it was a favour to get one! Early and

late Lord George was at work about it, calling on Ministers, writing notes, and paying visits, till you'd think it was life and death were involved in our success.

You have no notion, Molly, how different these matters are abroad and with us. At home, we go to a play or a circus just to be amused for the time, and we never think more of the creatures we see there than if they weren't of our species; but, abroad, it's exactly the reverse. Nothing else is talked of, or thought of, but how much the tenor is to have for six nights. "Is Carlotta singing well? Is Nina fatter? How is Francesca dancing? Does she do the little step like a goat, this season? or has she forgotten her rainbow spring?" Now, Lord George and James gave us no peace about all these people till we knew every bit of the private history of them, from the Man that carried a Bull on his back, to the small Child with Wings, that was tossed about for a shuttlecock by its father and uncle. Then there was a certain Sofia Bettrame, that everybody was wild about; the telegraph at one time saying she was at Lyons, then she was at Vichy, then at Mont Cenis;—now she was sick, now she was supping with the Princess Odelzeffska—and, in fact, what between the people that were in *love* with *her*, and a number of others to whom she was *in debt*, it was quite impossible to hear of anything else but "La Sofia," "La Bettrame," from morning till night. It's long before an honest woman, Molly, would engross so much of public notice; and so I couldn't forbear remarking to K. I.

Nobody cared to ask where the Crown Prince of Russia was going to put up, or where the Archduchess of Austria was staying, but all were eager to learn if the Croce di Matta, or the Leone d'Oro, or the Cour de Naples were to lodge the peerless Sofia. The man that saw her horses arrive was the fashion for two entire days, and an old gentleman, who had talked with her courier, got three dinner invitations on the strength of it. What discussions there were whether she was to receive a hundred thousand francs, or as many crowns; and then whether for one or for two nights. Then there were wagers about her age, her height, the colour of her eyes, and the height of her instep, till I own to you, Molly, it was downright offensive to the mother of a family to listen to what went on about her; James being just as bad as the rest.

At last, my dear, comes the news that Sofia has taken a sulk and won't appear. The Grand-Duchess of somewhere did something, or didn't do it—I forget which—that was or was not "due to her." I wish you saw the consternation of the town at the tidings. If it was the plague was announced, the state of distraction would have been less.

You wouldn't believe me if I told you how they took it to heart. Old generals with white moustaches—fat, elderly gentlemen in counting-houses—grave shopkeepers—and grim-looking clerks in the Excise, went about as if

they had lost their father, and fallen suddenly into diminished circumstances. They shook hands, when they met, with a deep sigh, and parted with a groan, as if the occasion was too much for their feelings.

At this moment, therefore, after all the trouble and expense, nobody knows if there will be any Tournament at all. Some say it is the Government has found out that the whole thing was a conspiracy for a rising; and there are fifty rumours afloat about Mazzini himself being one of the company, in the disguise of a juggler. But what may be the real truth it is impossible to say. At all events, I'll not despatch this till I can give you the latest tidings.

Tuesday Evening.

The telegraph has just brought word that SHE *will* come. James is gone down to the office to get a copy of the despatch.

James is come back to say that she is at Novi. If she arrive here to-night, there will be an illumination of the town! Is not this too bad, Molly? Doesn't your blood run cold at the thought of it all?

They're shouting like mad under my window now, and Lord George thinks she must be come already. James has come in with his hat in tatters, and his coat in rags. The excitement is dreadful. The people suspect that the Government are betraying them to Russia, and are going to destroy a palace that belongs to a tallow merchant.

All is right, Molly. She is come! and they are serenading her now under the windows of the "Croce di Matta!"

Wednesday Night.

If my trembling hand can subscribe legibly a few lines, it is perhaps the last you will ever receive from your attached Jemima. I was never intended to go through such trials as these; and they're now rending a heart that was only made for tenderness and affection.

We were there, Molly! After such a scene of crushing and squeezing as never was equalled, we got inside the Circus, and with the loss of my new turban and one of my "plats," we reached our box, within two of the stage, and nearly opposite the King. For an hour or so, it was only fainting was going on all around us, with the heat and the violent struggle to get in. Nobody minded the stage at all, where they were doing the same kind of things we used to see long ago. Ten men in pinkish buff, vaulting over an old white horse, and the Clown tumbling over the last of them with a screech — the little Infant of three years, with a strap round its waist, standing and tottering on the horse's back—the man with the brass balls and the basin, and the other one that stood on the bottles—all passed off tiresome enough, till a grand flourish of trumpets announced Signor Annibale,

the great Modern Hercules. In he rode, Molly, full gallop, all dressed in a light, flesh-coloured web, and looking so like naked that I screeched out when I saw him. His hair was divided on his forehead, and cut short all round the head; and, indeed, I must confess he was a fine-looking man. After a turn or two, brandishing a big club, he galloped in again, but quickly reappeared with a woman lying over one of his arms, and her hair streaming down half-way to the ground. This was Sofia; and you may guess the enthusiasm of the audience at her coming! There she lay, like in a trance, as he dashed along at full speed, the very tip of one foot only touching the saddle, and her other leg dangling down like dead. It was shocking to hear the way they talked of her symmetry and her shape—not but they saw enough to judge of it, Molly!—till at last the giant stopped to breathe a little just under our box. K. I. and the young men of course leaned over to have a good look at her with their glasses, when suddenly James screamed: "By the——"—I won't say what—"it is herself!" Mary Anne and I both rose together. The sight left my eyes, Molly, for she looked up at me, and who was it—but the Countess that James was going to marry! There she was, lying languidly on the giant, smiling up at us as cool as may be. I gave a screech, Molly, that made the house ring, and went off in Mary Anne's arms.

If this isn't disgrace enough to bring me to the grave, Nature must have given stronger feelings than she knows to your ever afflicted and heart-broken

JEMIMA DODD.

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## LETTER XXXII.

MISS CAROLINE DODD TO MISS COX, AT MISS MINCING'S ACADEMY, BLACK ROCK, IRELAND.

Sestri, Gulf of Genoa.

MY DEAR MISS COX,—I had long looked forward to our visit to Genoa in order to write to you. I had fancied a thousand things of the "Superb City" which would have been matters of interest, and hoped that many others might have presented themselves to actual observation. But with that same fatality by which the future for ever evades us, we have come and gone again, and really seen nothing.

Instead of a week or fortnight passed in loitering about these mysterious, narrow streets, each one of which is a picture, poking into crypts, and

groping along the aisles of those dim churches, and then issuing forth into the blaze of sunshine to see the blue sea heaving in mighty masses on the rocky shore, we came here to see some vulgar spectacle of a Circus or a Tournament. By ill-luck, too, even this pleasure has proved abortive; a very mortifying, I might say humiliating, discovery awaited us, and we have, for shame's sake, taken our refuge in flight from one of the most interesting cities in the whole peninsula.

I am ashamed to confess to you how ill I have borne the disappointment. The passing glimpses I caught here and there of steep old alleys, barely wide enough for three to go abreast—the little squares, containing some quaint monument or some fantastic fountain—the massive iron gateways, showing through the bars the groves of orange-trees within—the wide portals, opening on great stairs of snow-white marble—all set me a dreaming of that Proud Genoa, with its merchant-princes, who combined all the haughty characteristics of a feudal state with the dashing spirit of a life of enterprise.

The population, too, seemed as varied in type as the buildings around them. The bronzed, deep-browed Ligurian—the "Faquino"—by right of birth, stood side by side with the scarcely less athletic Dalmatian. The Arab from Tiflis, the Suliote, the Armenian, the dull-eyed Moslem, and the treacherous-looking Moor, were all grouped about the Mole, with a host of those less picturesque figures that represent Northern Europe. There, was heard every language and every dialect. There, too, seem the lineaments of every nation, and the traits of every passion that distinguish a people. Just as on the deep blue water that broke beside them were ships of every build, from the proud three-decker to the swift "lateen," and from the tall, taper spars of the graceful clipper, to the heavily-rounded, low-masted galliot of the Netherlands.

I own to you, that however the actual life of commerce may include common-place events, and common-place people, there is something about the sea and those that live on the great waters, that always has struck me as eminently poetical.

The scene—the adventurous existence—the strange far-away lands they have visited—the Spice Islands of the South—the cold shores of the Arctic Seas—the wondrous people with whom they have mingled—the dangers they have confronted—all invest the sailor with a deep interest to me, and I regard him ever as one who has himself been an actor in the great drama of which I have only read the outline.

I was, indeed, very sorry to leave Genoa, and to leave it, too, unseen. An event, however, too painful to allude to, compelled us to start at once; and we came on here to the little village from whence I write. A lovely spot it is—sheltered from the open sea by a tall promontory, wooded with waving pines, whose feathery foliage is reflected in the calm sea beneath. A gentle

curve of the strand leads to Chiavari, another town about six miles off, and behind us, landward, rise the great Apennines, several thousand feet in height—grand, barren, volcanic-looking masses of wildest outline, and tinted with the colours of every mineral ore. On the very highest pinnacles of these are villages perched, and the tall tower of a church is seen to rise against the blue sky, at an elevation, one would fancy, untrodden by man.

There is a beautiful distinctness in Italian landscape—every detail is "picked out" sharply. The outline of every rock and cliff, of every tree, of every shrub, is clean, and well defined. Light and shadow fall boldly, and even abruptly on the eye; but, shall I own it? I long for the mysterious distances, the cloud-shadows, the vague atmospheric tints of our Northern lands. I want those passing effects that seem to give a vitality to the picture, and make up something like a story of the scene. It is in these the mind revels as in a dreamland of its own. It is from these we conjure up so many mingled thoughts of the past, the present, and the coming time—investing the real with the imaginary, and blending the ideal with the actual world.

How naturally do all these thoughts lead us to that of Home! Happily for us, there is that in the religion of our hearts towards home that takes no account of the greater beauty of other lands. The loyalty we owe our own hearth defies seduction. Admire, glory in how you will the grandest scene the sun ever set upon, there is still a holy spot in your heart of hearts for some little humble locality—a lonely glen—a Highland tarn—a rocky path beside some winding river, rich in its childish memories, redolent of the bright hours of sunny infancy—and this you would not give for the most gorgeous landscapes that ever basked beneath Italian sky.

Do not fancy that I repine at being here because I turn with fond affection to the scene of my earliest days. I delight in Italy, I glory in its splendour of sky, and land, and water. I never weary of its beauteous vegetation, and my ear drinks in with equal pleasure the soft accents of its language, but I always feel that these things are to be treasured for memory to be enjoyed hereafter, just as the emigrant labours for the gold he is to spend in his own country. In this wise, it may be, when wandering along some mountain "boreen" at home, sauntering of a summer's eve through some waving meadow, that Italy in all its brightness will rise before me, and I will exult in my heart to have seen the towers of the Eternal City, and watched the waves that sleep in "still Sorento."

We leave this to-morrow for Spezia, there, to pass a few days; our object being to loiter slowly along till Papa can finally decide whether to go back or forward; for so is it, my dearest friend, all our long-planned tour and its pleasures have resolved themselves into a hundred complications of finance and fashionable acquaintances.

One might have supposed, from our failures in these attempts, that we should have learned at least our own unfitness for success. The very mortifications we have suffered might have taught us that all the enjoyment we could ever hope to reap could not repay the price of a single defeat. Yet here we are, just as eager, just as short-sighted, just as infatuated as ever, after a world that will have "none of us," and steadily bent on storming a position in society that, if won to-morrow, we could not retain.

I suppose that our reverses in this wise must have attained some notoriety, and I am even prepared to hear that the Dodd family have made themselves unhappily conspicuous by their unfortunate attempt at greatness; but I own, dearest friend, that I am not able to contemplate with the same philosophical submission the loss of good men's esteem and respect, to which these failures must expose us; an instance of which, I tremble to think, has already occurred to us.

You have often heard me speak of Mrs. Morris, and of the kindness with which she treated me during a visit at her house. She was, at that time, in what many would have called very narrow circumstances, but which, by consummate care and good management, sufficed to maintain a condition in every way suitable to a gentlewoman. She has since—or rather her son has,—succeeded to a very large fortune and a title. They were at Genoa when we arrived there—at the same hotel—and yet never either called on or noticed us! It is perfectly needless for me to say that I know, and know thoroughly, that no change in *their* position could have produced any alteration in their manner towards us. If ever there were people totally removed from such vulgarity—utterly incapable of even conceiving it—it is the Morrises. They were proud in their humble fortune—that is, they possessed a dignified self-esteem, that would have rejected the patronage of wealthy pretension, but willingly accepted the friendship of very lowly worth; and I can well believe that prosperity will only serve to widen the sphere of their sympathies, and make them as generous in action as they were once so in thought. That their behaviour to *us* depends on anything in themselves, I therefore completely reject—this I know and feel to be an impossibility. What a sad alternative is then left me, when I own that they have more than sufficient cause to shun our acquaintance and avoid our intimacy!

The loss of such a friend as Captain Morris might have been to James, is almost irreparable; and from the interest he once took in him, it is clear he felt well disposed for such a part; and I am thoroughly convinced that even Papa himself, with all his anti-English prejudices, has only to come into close contact with the really noble traits of the English character, to acknowledge their excellence and their worth. I am very far from undervaluing the great charm of manner which comes under the category of what is called "ai-

mable." I recognise all its fascination, and I even own to an exaggerated enjoyment of its display; but shall I confess that I believe that it is this very habit of simulation that detracts from the truthful character of a people, and that English bluntness is—so to say—the complement of English honesty? That they push the characteristic too far, and that they frequently throw a chill over social intercourse, which, under more genial influences, had been everything that was agreeable, I am free to admit; but, with all these deficiencies, the national character is incomparably above that of any other country I have any knowledge of. It will be scarcely complimentary if I add after all this, that we Irish are certainly more popular abroad than our Saxon relatives. We are more compliant with foreign usages; less rigid in maintaining our own habits; more conciliating in a thousand ways; and both our tongues and our temperaments more easily catch a new language and a new tone of society.

Is it not fortunate for you that I am interrupted in these gossipings by the order to march? Mary Anne has come to tell me that we are to start in half an hour; and so, adieu till we meet at Spezia.

Spezia, Croce di Malta.

The little sketch that I send with this, will give you some very faint notion of this beautiful gulf, with which I have as yet seen nothing to compare. This is indeed Italy. Sea—sky—foliage—balmy air—the soft influences of an atmosphere perfumed with a thousand odours—all breathe of the glorious land.

The Garden—a little promenade for the townspeople, that stretches along the beach, is one blaze of deep crimson flowers—the blossom of the San Guiseppe—I know not the botanical name. The blue sea—and such a blue!—mirrors every cliff, and crag, and castellated height with the most minute distinctness. Tall lateen-sailed boats glide swiftly to and fro; and lazy oxen of gigantic size drag rustling waggons of loaded vines along, the ruddy juice staining the rich earth as they pass.

Como was beautiful; but there was—so to say—a kind of trim coquetry in its beauty that did not please me. The villas—the gardens—the terraced walks—the pillared temples—seemed all the creations of a landscape-gardening spirit that eagerly profited by every accidental advantage of ground, and every casual excellence of situation. Now, here, there is none of this. All that man has done here, had been even better left undone. It is in the jutting promontories of rock-crowned olives—the land-locked, silent bays, darkened by woody shores—the wild, profuse vegetation, where the myrtle, the cactus, and the arbutus blend with the vine, the orange, and the fig—the sea itself, heaving as if oppressed with perfumed languor; and the tall

Apennines, snow-capped, in the distance, but whiter still in the clifts of pure Carrara marble. It is in these that Spezia maintains its glorious superiority, and in these it is indeed unequalled.

It will sound, doubtless, like a very ungenerous speech, when I say that I rejoice that this spot is so little visited—so little frequented—by those hordes of stray and straggling English who lounge about the Continent. I do not say this in any invidious spirit, but simply in the pleasure that I feel in the quiet and seclusion of a place which, should it become by any fatality "the fashion," will inevitably degenerate by all the vulgarities of the change. At present the Riviera—as the coast-line from Genoa to Pisa is called—is little travelled. The steamers passing to Leghorn by the cord of the arch, take away nearly all the tourists, so that Spezia, even as a bathing-place, is little resorted to by strangers. There are none, not one, of the ordinary signs of the watering-place about it. Neither donkeys to hire, nor subscription concerts; not a pony phaeton, a pianist, nor any species of human phenomenon to torment you; and the music of the town band is, I rejoice to say, so execrably bad, that even a crowd of twenty cannot be mustered for an audience.

Spezia is, therefore, *au naturel*—and long may it be so! Distant be the day when frescoed buildings shall rise around, to seduce from its tranquil scenery the peaceful lover of nature, and make of him the hot-checked gambler or the broken debauchee. I sincerely, hopefully trust this is not to be, at least in our time.

We made an excursion this morning by boat to Lerici, to see poor Shelley's house, the same that Byron lived in when here. It stands in the bight of a little bay of its own, and close to the sea; so close, indeed, that the waves were plashing and frothing beneath the arched colonnade on which it is built. It is now in an almost ruinous condition, and the damp, discoloured walls and crumbling plaster bespeak neglect and decay.

The view from the terrace is glorious; the gulf in its entire extent is before you, and the island of Palmaria stands out boldly, with the tall headlands of Porto Venere, forming the breakwater against the sea. It was here Shelley loved to sit; here, of a summer's night, he often sat till morning, watching the tracts of hill and mountain wax fainter and fainter, till they grew into brightness again with coming day; and it was not far from this, on the low beach of Via Reggio, that he was lost! The old fisherman who showed us the house had known him well, and spoke of his habits as one might have described those of some wayward child. The large and lustrous eyes, the long waving hair, the uncertain step, the look half-timid, half-daring, had made an impression so strong, that even after long years he could recal and tell of them.

It came on to blow a "Levanter" as we returned, and the sea got up with a rapidity almost miraculous. From a state of calm and tranquil repose, it suddenly became storm-lashed and tempestuous; nor was it without difficulty we accomplished a landing at Spezia. To-morrow we are to visit Porto Venere—the scene which it is supposed suggested to Virgil his description of the Cave in which Æneas meets with Dido; and the following day we go to Carrara to see the marble quarries and the artists' studios. In fact, we are "hand-booking" this part of our tour in the most orthodox fashion; and from the tame, half-effaced impressions objects suggest, of which you come primed with previous description, I can almost fancy that reading "John Murray" at your fireside at home might compensate for the fatigue and cost of a journey. It would be worse than ungrateful to deny the aid one derives from Guide-books; but there is unquestionably this disadvantage in them, that they limit your faculty of admiration or disapproval. They set down rules for your liking and disliking, and far from contributing to form and educate your taste, they cramp its development by substituting criticism for instinct.

As I hope to write to you again from Florence, I'll not prolong this too tiresome epistle, but, with my most affectionate greetings to all my old schoolfellows, ask my dear Miss Cox to believe me her ever attached and devoted

CAROLINE DODD.

The Morrises arrived here last night and went on this morning, without any notice of us.. They must have seen our names in the book when writing their own. Is not this more than strange? Mamma and Mary Anne seemed provoked when I spoke of it, so that I have not again alluded to the subject. I wish from my heart I could ask how *you* interpret their coldness.

## LETTER XXXIII.

MARY ANNE DODD TO MISS DOOLAN, OF BALLYDOOLAN.

Lucca. Pagnini's Hotel.

Dearest Kitty,—This must be the very shortest of letters, for we are on the wing, and shall be for some days to come. Very few words, however, will suffice to tell you that we have at length persuaded Papa to come on to Florence—for the winter, of course. Rome will follow—then Naples—e poi? —who knows! I think he must have received some very agreeable tidings from your Uncle Purcell, for he has been in better spirits than I have seen him latterly, and shows something like a return to his old vein of pleasantry. Not but I must own that it is what the French would call, very often, a *mauvaise plaisanterie* in its exercise, his great amusement being to decry and disparage the people of the Continent. He seems quite to forget that in every country the traveller is, and must be, a mark for knavery and cheating. His newness to the land, his ignorance, in almost all cases, of the language, his occasional mistakes, all point him out as a proper subject for imposition; and if the English come to compare notes with any continenal country, I'm not so sure we should have much to plume ourselves upon, as regards our treatment of strangers.

For our social misadventures abroad, it must be confessed that we are mainly most to blame ourselves. All the counterfeits of rank, station, and position, are so much better done by foreigners than by our people, that we naturally are more easily imposed on. Now in England, for instance, it would be easier to be a Duchess than to imitate one successfully. All the attributes that go to make up such a station abroad, might be assumed by any adventurer of little means and less capacity. We forget—or, more properly speaking, we do not know—this, when we come first on the Continent; hence the mistakes we fall into, and the disasters that assail us.

It would be very disagreeable for me to explain at length how what I mentioned to you about James's marriage has come to an untimely conclusion. Enough when I say that the lady was not, in any respect, what she had represented herself, and my dear brother may be said to have had a most fortunate escape. Of course the poor fellow has suffered considerably from the disappointment, nor are his better feelings alleviated by the—I will say—very in-

delicate raillery Papa is pleased to indulge in on the subject. It is, however, a theme I do not care to linger on, and I only thus passively allude to it that it may be buried in oblivion between us.

We came along here from Genoa by the seaboard, a very beautiful and picturesque road, traversing a wild range of the Apennines, and almost always within view of the blue Mediterranean. At Spezia we loitered for a day or two, to bathe, and I must say nothing can be more innocently primitive than the practice as followed there.

Ladies and gentlemen—men and women, if you like it better—all meet in the water as they do on land, or rather not as they do on land, but in a very first-parentage state of no-dressedness. There, they splash, swim, dive, and converse—float, flirt, talk gossip, and laugh with a most laudable forgetfulness of externals. Introductions and presentations go forward as they would in society, and a gentleman asks you to duck instead of to dance with him. It would be affectation in me were I not to say that I thought all this very shocking at first, and that I really could scarcely bring myself to adopt it; but Lord George, who really swims to perfection, laughed me out of some, and reasoned me out of others of my prejudices, and I will own, dearest Kitty, his arguments were unanswerable.

"Were you not very much ashamed," said he, "the first time you saw a ballet, or 'poses plastiques?'—did not the whole strike you as exceedingly indelicate?—and now, would not that very same sense of shame occur to you as real indelicacy, since in these exhibitions it is Art alone you admire—Art in its graceful development? The 'Ballarina' is not a woman, she is an ideal—she is a Hebe—a Psyche—an Ariadne, or an Aphrodite. Symmetry, grace, beauty of outline—these are the charms that fascinate you. Can you not, therefore, extend this spirit to the sea, and, instead of the Marquis of This and the Countess of That, only behold Tritons and sea nymphs disporting in the flood?"

I saw at once the force of this reasoning, Kitty, and perceived that to take any lower view of the subject would be really a gross indelicacy. I tried to make Cary agree with me, but utterly in vain—she is so devoid of imagination! There is, too, an utter want of refinement in her mind positively hopeless. She even confessed to me that Lord George, without his clothes, still seemed Lord George to her, and that no effort she could make was able to persuade her that the old Danish Minister, in the black leather skull-cap, had any resemblance to a river god. Mamma behaved much better; seeing that the custom was one followed by all the "best people;" she adopted it at once, and though she would scream out whenever a gentleman came to talk to her, I'm sure, with a few weeks' practice, she'd have perfectly reconciled herself to "etiquette in the water." Should you, with your very Irish notions, raise hands and eyes at all this, and mutter, "How very dreadful!—

how shocking!" and so on, I have only to remind you of what the Princess Pauline said to an English lady, who expressed her prudish horrors at the Princess having "sat for Canova in wet drapery:"—"Oh, it was not so disagreeable as you think; there was always a fire in the room." Now, Kitty, I make the same reply to your shocked scruples, by saying the sea was deliciously warm. Bathing is here indeed a glorious luxury. There is no shivering or shuddering, no lips chattering, blue-nosed, goose-skinned misery, like the home process! It is not a rush in, in desperation, a duck in agony, and a dressing in ague, but a delicious lounge, associated with all the enjoyments of scenery and society. The temperature of the sea is just sufficiently below that of the air to invigorate without chilling, like the tone of a company that stimulates without exhausting you. It is, besides, indescribably pleasant to meet with a pastime so suggestive of new themes of talk. Instead of the tiresome and trite topics of ballet and balls, and dress and diamonds, your conversation smacks of salt water, and every allusion "hath suffered a sea change." Instead of a compliment to your dancing, the flattery is now on your diving; and he who once offered his arm to conduct you to the "buffet," now proposes his company to swim out to a life-buoy!

And now let me get back to land once more, and you will begin to fancy that your correspondent is Undine herself in disguise. I was very sorry to leave Spezia, since I was just becoming an excellent swimmer. Indeed, the Surgeon of an American frigate assured me that he thought "I had been raised in the Sandwich Islands"—a compliment which, of course, I felt bound to accept in the sense that most flattered me.

We passed through Carrara, stopping only to visit one or two of the studios. They had not much to interest us, the artists being for the most part copyists, and their works usually busts; busts being now the same passion with our travelling countrymen as once were oil portraits. The consequence is, that every sculptor's shelves are loaded with thin-lipped, grim-visaged English women, and triple-chinned, apoplectic-looking aldermen, that contrast very unfavourably with the clean-cut brows and sharply-chiselled features of classic antiquity. The English are an eminently good-looking race of people, seen in their proper costume of broadcloth and velvet. They are manly and womanly. The native characteristics of boldness, decision, and high-hearted honesty are conspicuous in all their traits; nor is there any deficiency in the qualities of tenderness and gentleness. But with all this, when they take off their neckcloths, they make but very indifferent Romans; and he who looked a gentleman in his shirt-collar, becomes, what James would call, "an arrant snob" when seen in a toga. And yet they *will* do it! They have a notion that the Anglo-Saxon can do anything—and so he can, perhaps—the difference being whether he can *look* the character he knows so well how to *act*.

We left Carrara by a little mountain path to visit the Bagni di Lucca, a summer place, which once, in its days of Rouge-et-Noir celebrity, was greatly resorted to. The Principality of Lucca possessed at that period, too, its own reigning Duke, and had not been annexed to Tuscany. Like all these small states, without trade or commerce, its resources were mainly derived from the Court; and, consequently, the withdrawal of the Sovereign was the death-blow to all prosperity. It would be quite beyond me to speculate on the real advantages or disadvantages resulting from this practice of absorption, but pronouncing merely from externals, I should say that the small states are great sufferers. Nothing can be sadder than the aspect of this little capital. Ruined palaces, grass-grown streets, tenantless houses, and half-empty shops are seen everywhere. Poverty—I might call it misery—on every hand. The various arts and trades cultivated had been those required by, even called into existence by, the wants of a Court. All the usages of the place had been made to conform to its courtly life and existence, and now this was gone, and all the "occupation" with it! You are not, perhaps, aware that this same territory of Lucca supplies nearly all of that tribe of image and organ men, so well known, not only through Europe, but over the vast continent of America. They are skilful modellers naturally, and work really beautiful things in "terra cotta." They are a hardy mountain race, and, like all "montagnards," have an equal love for enterprise and an attachment to home. Thus they traverse every land and sea—they labour for years long in far-away climes—they endure hardships and privations of every kind—supported by the one thought of the day when they can return home again; and when in some high-perched mountain village—some "granuolo," or "bennabbia"—they can rest from wandering, and, seated amidst their kith and kind, tell of the wondrous things they have seen in their journeyings. It is not uncommon here, in spots the very wildest and least visited, to find a volume in English or French on the shelf of some humble cottage: now, it is perhaps a print, or an engraving of some English landscape—a spot, doubtless, endeared by some especial recollection—and not unfrequently a bird from Mexico—a bright-winged parrot from the Brazils—shows where the wanderer's footsteps have borne him, and shows, too, how even there the thoughts of home had followed.

Judged by our own experiences, these people are but scantily welcomed amongst us. They are constantly associated in our minds with intolerable hurdy-gurdies and execrable barrel-organs. They are the nightmare of invalids, and the terror of all studious heads, and yet the wealth with which they return shows that their gifts are both acknowledged and rewarded. It must be that to many the organ-man is a pleasant visitor, and the image-hawker a vendor of "high-art." I have seen a great many of them since we came here, and in their homes, too, for Mamma has taken up the notion that

these excellent people are all living in a state of spiritual darkness and destitution, and to enlighten them has been disseminating her precious little volume on the Miracles of Mount Orsaro. It is plain to me that all this zeal of a woman of a foreign nation seems to them a far more miraculous manifestation than anything in her little book; and they stare and wonder at her in a way that plainly shows a compassionate distrust of her sanity.

It is right I should say that Lord George thinks all these people knaves and vagabonds; and James says they are a set of smugglers, and live by contraband. Whatever be the true side of the picture, I must now leave to your own acuteness, or rather to your prejudices, which, for all present purposes, are quite good enough judges to decide.

Papa likes this place so much, that he actually proposed passing the winter here, for "cheapness;" a very horrid thought, but which, fortunately, Lord George averted by a private hint to the landlord of the inn, saying that Papa was rolling in wealth, but an awful miser; so that when the bill made its appearance, with everything charged double, Papa's indignation turned to a perfect hatred of the town and all in it; the consequence is, that we are to-morrow to leave for Florence, which, if but one-half of what Lord George says be true, must be a real earthly paradise. Not that I can possibly doubt him, for he has lived there two, or, I believe, three winters—knows everybody and eveything. How I long to see the Cascini, the Court Balls, the Private Theatricals at Prince Polywkowsky's, the pic-nics at Fiezole, and those dear receptions at Madame della Montanare's, where, as Lord G. says, every one goes, and "there's no absurd cant heard about character."

Indeed, to judge from Lord G.'s account, Florence—to use his own words—is "the most advanced city in Europe;" that is to say, the Florentines take a higher and more ample view of social philosophy than any other people. The erring individual in our country is always treated like the wounded crow—the whole rookery is down upon him at once. Not so here; he—or *she*, to speak more properly—is tenderly treated and compassionated; all the little blandishments of society showered on her. She is made to feel that the world is really not that ill-natured thing sour moralists would describe it; and even if she feel indisposed to return to safer paths, the perilous ones are made as pleasant for her as it is possible. These are nearly his own words, dearest, and are they not beautiful? so teeming with delicacy and true charity. And oh! Kitty, I must say these are habits we do not practise at home in our own country. But of this more hereafter; for the present, I can think of nothing but the society of this delightful city, and am trying to learn off by heart the names of all the charming houses in which he is to introduce us. He has written, besides, to various friends in England for letters for us, so that we shall be unquestionably better off here—socially speaking—than in any other city of the Continent.

We leave this after breakfast to-morrow; and before the end of the week it is likely you may hear from me again, for I am longing to give you my first impressions of Firenza la Bella; till when, I am, as ever, your dearly attached

MARY ANNE DODD.

P.S.—Great good fortune, Kitty—we shall arrive in time for the races. Lord G. has got a note from Prince Pincecotti, asking him to ride his horse "Bruise-drog"—which it seems is the Italian for "Bull-dog"—and he consents. He is to wear my colours too, dearest—green and white—and I have promised to make him a present of his jacket. How handsome he *will* look in jockey dress! James is in distraction at being too heavy for even a hurdle race; but as he is six feet one, and stout in proportion, it is out of the question. Lord G. insists upon it that Cary and I must go on horseback. Mamma agrees with him, and Papa as stoutly resists. It is in vain we tell him that all depends on the way we open the campaign here, and that the present opportunity is a piece of rare good fortune; he is in one of his obstinate moods, and mutters something about "beggars on horseback," and the place they "ride to."

I open my letter to say—carried triumphantly, dearest—we *are* to ride.

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## LETTER XXXIV.

JAMES DODD TO ROBERT DOOLAN, ESQUIRE, TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.

Hôtel d'Italie, Florence, Wednesday.

MY DEAR BOB,—Here we are going it, and in about the very "fastest" place I ever set foot in. In any other city, society seems to reserve itself for evening and lamplight; but here, Bob, you make "running from the start," and keep up the pace till you come in. In the morning there's the Club, with plenty of whist; all the gossip of the town—and such gossip, too—the real article, by Jove!—no shadowy innuendoes—no vague and half-mystified hints of a flaw here or a crack there; but home blows, my boy—with a smashed character, or a ruined reputation at every stroke. This is, however, only a breathing canter, for what awaits you at the Cascini—a sort of "promenade," where all the people meet in their carriages, and exchange confidences in scandal, and invitations to tea—the Cascini being to the Club what the Ballet is to the Opera. After this, you have barely time to dress for

dinner; which over, the Opera begins. There you pay visits from box to box—learn all that is going on for the evening—hear where the prettiest women are going, and where the smartest play will be found. Midnight arrives, and then—but not before—the real life of Florence begins. The dear Contessa, that never showed by daylight, at last appears in her salon; the charming Marchesa, whose very head-dress is a study from Titian, and whose dark-fringed eyes you think you recognise from the picture in "the Pitti," at length sails in, to receive the humble homage of—what, think you? a score of devoted worshippers?—a band of chivalrous adorers? Nothing of the kind, Bob: a dozen or so of young fellows, in all manner of costumes, and all shapes of beards and moustaches; all smoking cigars or cigarettes, talking, singing, laughing, thumping the piano, shouting choruses, playing tricks with cards—all manner of tomfoolery, in fact; with a dash of enthusiasm in the nonsense that carries you along in spite of yourself. The conversation—if one can dare to call it such—is a wild chaos of turf-talk, politics, scandal, literature, buffoonery, and the ballet. There is abundance of wit—plenty of real smartness on every side. The fellows who have just described the cut of a tucker, can tell you accurately the contents of a treaty; and they who did not seem to have a thought above the depth of a flounce or the width of a sandal, are thoroughly well versed in the politics of every state of Europe. There is no touch of sarcasm in their gaiety—none of that refined, subtle ridicule, that runs through a Frenchman's talk—these fellows are eminently good-natured: the code of morals is not severe, and hence the secret of the merciful judgments you hear pronounced on every one.

As to breeding, we English should certainly say there was an excess of familiarity. Everybody puts his arm on your shoulder, pats you on the back, and calls you by your Christian name. I am "Giacomo," to a host of fellows I don't know by name; and "Gemess," to a select few, who pride themselves on speaking English. At all events, Bob, there is no constraint—no reserve amongst them. You are at your ease at once—and good fellowship is the order of the day.

As to the women, they have a half-shy, half-confident look, that puzzles one sadly. They'll stand a stare from you most unblushingly—they think it's all very right and very reasonable that you should look at them as long and as fixedly as you would do at a Raffaelle in the Gallery: but with all that, there is great real delicacy of deportment, and those coram-publico preferences which are occasionally exhibited in England, and even in France, are never seen in Italian society. As to good looks, there is an abundance, but of a character which an Englishman at first will scarcely accept as beauty. They are rarely handsome by feature, but frequently beautiful by expression. There is, besides, a graceful languor, a tender Cleopatra-like voluptuousness in their air that distinguishes them from other women; and I have no doubt

that any one who has lived long in Italy would pronounce French smartness and coquetry the very essence of vulgarity. They cannot dress like a Parisian, nor waltz like a Wienerin; but, to my thinking, they are far more captivating than either. I am already in love with four, and I have just heard of a fifth, that I am sure will set me downright distracted. There's one thing I like especially in them; and I own to you, Bob, it would compensate to me for any amount of defects, which I believe do not pertain to them. It is this: they have no accomplishments—they neither murder Rossini, nor mar Salvator Rosa; they are not educated to torment society, poison social intercourse, and push politeness to its last entrenchment. You are not called on for silence while they scream, nor for praise when they paint. They do not convert a drawing-room into a boarding-school on examination-day, and they are satisfied to charm you by fascinations that cost you no compromise to admire.

After all, I believe we English are the only people that adopt the other plan. We take a commercial view of the matter, and having invested so much of our money in accomplishment, we like to show our friends that we have made a good speculation. For myself, I'd as soon be married to a musical snuff-box, or a daguerreotype machine, as to a "well-brought-up English girl," who had always the benefit of the best masters in music and drawing. The fourth-rate artist in anything is better than the first-rate amateur; and I'd just as soon wear home-made shoes as listen to home-made music.

I have not been presented in any of the English houses here as yet. There is some wonderful controversy going forward as to whether we are to call first, or to wait to be called on; and I begin to fear that the Carnival will open before it can be settled. The governor, too, has got into a hot controversy with our minister here, about our presentation at Court. It would appear that the rule is, you should have been presented at home, in order to be eligible for presentation abroad. Now, we have been at the Castle, but never at St. James's. The Minister, however, will not recognise reflected Royalty; and here we are, suffering under a real Irish grievance O'Connell would have given his eye for. The fun of it is, that the Court—at least I hear so—is crammed with English, who never even saw a Viceroy, nor perhaps partook of the high festivities of a Lord Mayor's Ball. How they got there is not for me to inquire, but I suppose that a vow to a Chamberlain is like a Custom-house oath, and can always be reconciled to an easy conscience.

We have arrived here at an opportune moment—time to see all the notorieties of the place at the races, which began to-day. So far as I can learn, the foreigners have adopted the English taste, with the true spirit of imitators that is, they have given little attention to any improvement in the

breed of cattle, but have devoted considerable energy to all the rogueries of the ring, and with such success that Newmarket and Doncaster might still learn something from the "Legs" of the Continent.

Tiverton, who is completely behind the scenes, has told me some strange stories about their doings; and, at the very moment I am writing, horses are being withdrawn, names scratched, forfeits declared, and bets pronounced "off," with a degree of precipitation and haste that shows how little confidence exists amongst the members of the ring. As for myself, not knowing either the course, the horses, nor the colours of the riders, I take my amusement in observing—what is really most laughable—the absurd effort made by certain small folk here to resemble the habits and ways of certain big ones in England. Now, it is a retired coachmaker, or a pensioned-off clerk in a Crown-office, that jogs down the course, betting-book in hand, trying to look —in the quaintness of his cob and the trim snugness of his groom—like some old county squire of fifteen thousand a year. Now, it is some bluff, middle-aged gent, who, with coat thrown back, and thumbs in his waistcoat, insists upon being thought Lord George Bentinck. There are Massy Stanleys, George Paynes, Lord Wiltons, and Colonel Peels by dozens; "Gentlemen Jocks," swathed in drab paletots, to hide the brighter rays of costume beneath, gallop at full speed across the grass on ponies of most diminutive size; smartly got-up fellows stand under the judge's box, and slang the authorities above, or stare at the ladies in front. There are cold luncheons, sandwiches, champagne, and soda-water; bets, beauties, and bitter beer—everything, in short, that constitutes races, but horses! The system is, that every great man gives a cup and wins it himself; the only possible interest attending such a process being whether, in some paroxysm of anger at this, or some frump at that, he may not withdraw his horse at the last moment —an event on which a small knot of gentlemen with dark eyes, thick lips, and aquiline noses, seem to speculate on as a race chance, and only second in point of interest to a whist party at the Casino with a couple of newly-come "Bulls." A more stupid proceeding, therefore, than these races—bating always the fun derived from watching the "snobocracy" I have mentioned—cannot be conceived. Now it was a walk over; now a "sell;" now two horses of the same owner; now one horse that was owned by three. The private history of the rogueries might possibly amuse, but all that met the public eye was of the very slowest imaginable.

I begin to think, Bob, that horse-racing is only a sport that can be maintained by a great nation abounding in wealth, and with all the appliances of state and splendour. You ought to have gorgeous equipages, magnificent horses, thousands of spectators, stands crowded to the roof by a class such as only exists in great countries. Royalty itself, in all its pomp, should be there; and all that represents the pride and circumstance of a mighty people.

To try these things on a small scale is ridiculous—just as a little navy of one sloop and a steamer! With great proportions and ample verge, the detracting elements are hidden from view. The minor rascalities do not intrude themselves on a scene of such grandeur; and though cheating, knavery, and fraud are there, they are not foreground figures. Now, on a little "race-course," it is exactly the reverse: just as on board of a three-decker you know nothing of the rats, but in a Nile boat they are your bedfellows and your guests at dinner.

To-morrow we are to have a match with gentlemen riders, and if anything worth recording occurs I'll keep a corner for it. Mother is in the grand stand with any amount of Duchesses and Marchionesses around her. The Governor is wandering about the field, peeping at the cattle, and wondering how the riders are to get round a sharp turn at the end of the course. The girls are on horseback with Tiverton; and, in the long intervals between the matches, I jot down these rough notes for you. The scene itself is beautiful. The field, flanked on one side by the wood of the Cascini, is open on t'other to the mountains: Fiezole, from base to summit, is dotted over with villas half buried in groves of orange and olive trees. The Val d'Arno opens on one side, and the high mountain of Vallombrosa on the other. The gaily dressed and bright-costumed Florentine population throng the ground itself, and over their heads are seen the glorious domes, and towers, and spires of beautiful Florence, under a broad sky of cloudless blue, and in an atmosphere of rarest purity.

Thursday.

Tiverton has won his match, and with the worst horse too. Of his competitors, one fell off; another never got up at all; a third bolted; and a fourth took so much out of his horse in a breathing canter before the race, that the animal was dead beat before he came to the start. And now, the knowing ones are going about muttering angry denunciations on the treachery of grooms and trainers, and vowing that "Gli Gentlemen Riders son' grandi bricconi."

I am glad it is over. The whole scene was one of quarrelling, row, and animosity from beginning to end. These people neither know how to win money nor to lose it; and as to the English who figure on such occasions, take my word for it, Bob, the national character gains little by their alliance. It is too soon for me, perhaps, to pronounce in this fashion, but Tiverton has told me so many little private histories—revealed so much of the secret memoirs of these folk—that I believe I am speaking what subsequent experience will amply confirm. For the present, good-by, and believe me,

Ever yours,

JAMES DODD.

## LETTER XXXV.

KENNY DODD TO THOMAS PURCELL, ESQ., GRANGE, BRUFF.

Florence, Lungo l'Arno.

My dear Tom,—It is nigh a month since I wrote to you last, and if I didn't "steal a few hours from the night, my dear," it might be longer still. The address will tell you where we are—I wish anybody or anything else would tell you how or why we came here! I intended to have gone back from Genoa, nor do I yet understand what prevented me doing so. My poor head none of the clearest—in what may be called my lucid intervals—is but a very indifferent thinking machine when harassed, worried, and tormented as I have been latterly. You have heard how James's Countess, the Cardinal's niece and the betrothed of a Neapolitan Prince, turned out to be a Circus woman, one of those bits of tawdry gold fringe and pink silk pantaloons that dance on a chalked saddle to a one shilling multitude! By good fortune she had two husbands living, or she might have married the boy. As it was, he has gone into all manner of debt on her account, and if it was not that I can defy ruin in any shape—for certain excellent reasons you may guess at—this last exploit of his would go nigh to our utter destruction.

We hurried away out of Genoa in shame, and came on here by slow stages. The women kind plucked up wonderfully on the way, and I believe of the whole party your humble servant alone carried abasement with him inside the gates of Florence.

My sense of sorrow and shame probably somehow blunted my faculties and dulled my reasoning powers, for I would seem to have concurred in a vast number of plans and arrangements that now, when I have come to myself, strike me with intense astonishment. For instance, we have taken a suite of rooms on the Arno, hired a cook, a carriage, and a courier; we are, I hear, also in negotiation for a box at the "Pergola," and I am credibly informed that I am myself looking out for saddle-horses for the girls, and a "stout-made, square-jointed cob of lively action," to carry myself.

It may be all true—I have no doubt it is more philosophical, as the cant phrase is—to believe Kenny Dodd to be mistaken rather than suppose his whole family deranged, so that if I hear to-morrow or next day that I'm about to take lessons in singing, or to hire a studio as a sculptor, I'm fully determined to accept the tidings with a graceful submission. There is only

one thing, Tom Purcell, that passes my belief, and that is, that there ever lived as besotted an old fool as your friend Kenny D., a man so thoroughly alive to everything that displeased him, and yet so prone to endure it: so actively bent on going a road the very opposite to the one he wanted to travel; and that entered heart and soul into the spirit of ruining himself, as if it was the very best fun imaginable.

That you can attempt to follow me through the vagaries of this strange frame of mind is more than I expect, neither do I pretend to explain it to you. There it is, however—make what you can of it, just as you would with a handful of copper money abroad, where there was no clue to the value of a single coin in the mass, but wherewith you are assured you have received your change.

With a fine lodging, smart liveries, a very good cook, and a well-supplied table, I thought it possible that though ruin would follow in about three months, yet in the interval I might probably enjoy a little ease and contentment. At all events, like the Indian, who, when he saw that he must inevitably go over the Falls, put his paddles quietly aside, and resolved to give himself no unnecessary trouble, I also determined I'd leave the boat alone, and never "fash myself for the future." Wise as this policy may seem, it has not saved me. Mrs. D. is a regular storm-bird! wherever she goes she carries her own hurricane with her, and I verily believe she could get up a tornado under the equator!

In a little pious paroxysm that seized her in the mountains, she, at the instigation of a stupid old Lord there, must needs write a tract about certain miracles that were or were not—for I'll not answer for either—performed by a saint that for many years back nobody had paid any attention to. This precious volume cost *her* three weeks' loss of rest, and *me* about thirty pounds sterling. It was, however, a pious work, and even as a kind of *visa* on her passport to Heaven, I suppose it would be called cheap; I assure you, Tom, I spent the cash grudgingly; that I did pay it at all I thought was about as good "a miracle" as any in the book.

Armed with this tract she tramped through the Lucchese mountains, leaving copies everywhere, and thrusting her volume into the hands of all who would have it. I'm no great admirer of this practice in any sect. The world has too many indiscreet people to make this kind of procedure an over safe one; besides, I'm not quite certain that even a faulty religion is not preferable to having none at all, and it happens not unfrequently that the convert stops half way on his road, and leaves one faith without ever reaching the other. I'll not discuss this matter further; I have trouble enough on my hands without it.

These little tracts of Mrs. D.'s attracted the attention of the authorities. It was quite enough that they had been given away gratis, and by an

Englishwoman, to stamp them as attempts to proselytise, and, although they couldn't explain how, yet they readily adopted the idea that the whole was written in a figurative style purposely to cover its real object, and so they set lawyers and judges to work, and what between oaths of peasants and affirmations of prefects, they soon made a very pretty case, and yesterday morning, just as we had finished breakfast, a sergeant of the Gendarmerie entered the room, and with a military salute asked which was la Signora Dodd? The answer being given, he proceeded to read aloud a paper that he held in his hand, the contents of which Cary translated for me in a whisper. They were, in fact, a judge's warrant to commit Mrs. D. to prison under no less than nine different sections of a new law on the subject of religion. In vain we assured him that we were all good Catholics, kept every ordinance of the Church, and hated a heretic. He politely bowed to our explanation, but said, that with this part of the matter he had nothing to do; that doubtless we should be able to establish our innocence before the tribunal; meanwhile Mrs. D. must go to prison!

I'm ashamed at all the warmth of indignation we displayed, seeing that this poor fellow was simply discharging his duty—and that no pleasant one—but somehow it is so natural to take one's anger out on the nearest official, that we certainly didn't spare him. Tiverton threatened him with the House of Commons; James menaced him with the *Times;* Mary Anne protested that the British fleet would anchor off Leghorn within forty hours; and I hinted that Mazzini should have the earliest information of this new stroke of tyranny. He bore all like—a gendarme! stroked his moustaches, clinked his sword on the ground, put his cocked-hat a little more squarely on his head, and stood at ease. Mrs. D.—there's no guessing how a woman will behave in any exigency—didn't go off, as I thought and expected she would, in strong hysterics; she didn't even show fight; she came out in what, I am free to own, was for her a perfectly new part, and played martyr; ay, Tom, she threw up her eyes, clasped her hands upon her bosom, and said, "Lead me away to the stake—burn me—torture me—cut me in four quarters—tear my flesh off with hot pincers." She suggested a great variety of these practices, and with a volubility that showed me she had studied the subject. Meanwhile the sergeant grew impatient, declared the "séance" was over, and ordered her at once to enter the carriage that stood awaiting her at the door, and which was to convey her to the prison. I needn't dwell on a very painful scene; the end of it was, that she was taken away, and though we all followed in another carriage, we were only admitted to a few moments of leave-taking with her, when the massive gates were closed, and she was a captive!

Tiverton told me I must at once go to our Legation and represent the case. "Be stout about it," said he; "say she must be liberated in half an

hour. Make the Minister understand you are somebody, and won't stand any humbug. I'd go," he added, "but I can't do anything against the present Government." A knowing wink accompanied this speech, and though I didn't see the force of the remark, I winked too, and said nothing.

"What language does he speak?" said I, at last.

"Our Minister? English, of course!"

"In that case I'm off at once;" and away I drove to the Legation. The Minister was engaged. Called again—he was out. Called later—he was in conference with the Foreign Secretary. Later still—he was dressing for dinner. Tipped his valet a Nap. and sent in my card, with a pressing entreaty to be admitted. Message brought back, quite impossible—must call in the morning. Another Nap. to the flunkey, and asked his advice.

"His Excellency receives this evening—come as one of the guests."

I didn't half like this counsel, Tom; it was rather an obtrusive line of policy, but what was to be done? I thought for a few minutes, and seeing no chance of anything better, resolved to adopt it. At ten o'clock, then, behold me ascending a splendidly illuminated staircase, with marble statues on either side, half hid amidst all manner of rare and beautiful plants. Crowds of splendidly dressed people are wending their way upward with myself—doubtless with lighter hearts—which was not a difficult matter. At the top, I find myself in a dense crowd, all a blaze of diamonds and decorations, gorgeous uniforms and jewelled dresses of the most costly magnificence.

I assure you I was perfectly lost in wonderment and admiration. The glare of wax-lights, the splendour of the apartments themselves, and the air of grandeur on every side, actually dazzled and astounded me. At each instant I heard the title of Duke and Prince given to some one or other. "Your Highness is looking better;" "I trust your Grace will dance;" "Is the Princess here?" "Pray present me to the Duchess." Egad, Tom, I felt I was really in the very centre of that charmed circle of which one hears so much and yet sees so little.

I needn't say that I knew nobody, and I own to you it was a great relief to me that nobody knew *me*. Where should I find the Minister in all this chaos of splendour, and if I did succeed, how obtain the means of addressing him? These were very puzzling questions to be solved, and by a brain turning with excitement, and half wild between astonishment and apprehension. On I went, through room after room—there seemed no end to this gorgeous display. Here they were crushed together, so that stars, crosses, epaulettes, diamond coronets, and jewelled arms seemed all one dense mass; here, they were broken into card parties; here, they were at billiards; here, dancing; and here, all were gathered around a splendid buffet, where the pop, pop of champagne corks explained the lively sallies of the talkers. I was not sorry

to find something like refreshment; indeed, I thought my courage stood in need of a glass of wine, and so I set myself vigorously to pierce the firm and compact crowd in front of me. My resolve had scarcely been taken, when I felt a gentle but close pressure within my arm, and on looking down, saw three fingers of a white-gloved hand on my wrist.

I started back; and even before I could turn my head, Tom, I heard a gentle voice murmur in my ear: "Dear creature—how delighted to see you —when did you arrive?" and my eyes fell upon Mrs. Gore Hampton! There she was, in all the splendour of full dress, which, I am bound to say, in the present instance, meant as small an amount of raiment as any one could well venture out in. That I never saw her look half so beautiful is quite true. Her combs of brilliants set off her glossy hair, and added new brilliancy to her eyes, while her beauteous neck and shoulders actually shone in the brightness of its tints. I bethought me of the "Splugen," Tom, and the cold insolence of her disdain. I tried to summon up indignation to reproach her, but she anticipated me, by saying, with a bewitching smile: "Adolphus isn't here now, Doddy!" Few as the words were, Tom, they revealed a whole history—they were apology for the past, and assurance for the present "Still," said I, "you might have——" "What a silly thing it is!" said she, putting her fan on my lips; "and it wants to quarrel with me the very moment of meeting; but it mustn't, and it shan't. Get me some supper, Doddy—an oyster patty, if there be one—if not, an ortolan truffé."

This at least was a good, sensible speech, and so I wedged firmly into the mass, and, by dint of very considerable pressure, at length landed my fair friend at the buffet. It was, I must say, worth all the labour. There was everything you can think of, from sturgeon to Maraschino jelly, and wines of every land of Europe. It was a good opportunity to taste some rare vintages, and so I made a little excursion through Marcobrunner to Johannisberg, and thence on to Steinberger. Leaving the Rhine land, I coquetted awhile with Burgundy, especially Chambertin, back again, however, to Champagne, for the sake of its icy coldness, to wind up with some wonderful Schumlawer—a Hungarian tap—that actually made me wish I had been born a hussar."

It is no use trying to explain to *you* the tangled maze of my poor bewitched faculties. *You*, whose experiences in such trials have not gone beyond a struggle for a ham sandwich, or a chicken bone for some asthmatic old lady in black satin—*you* can neither comprehend my situation, nor compassionate my difficulties. How shall I convey to your uninformed imagination the bewitching effects of wine, beauty, heat, light, music, soft words, soft glances, blue eyes, and snowy shoulders? I may give you all the details, but you'll never be able to blend them into that magic mass that melts the heart, and makes such fools of the Kenny Dodds of this world. There is such a thing,



believe me, as "an atmosphere of enchantment." There are elements which compose a magical air around you, perfumed with odours, and still more entrancing by flatteries. The appeal is now to your senses, now to your heart, your affections, your intellect, your sympathies; your very self-love is even addressed, and you are more than man, at least more than an Irishman, if you resist.

Egad, Tom, she is a splendid woman! and has that air of gentleness and command about her that somehow subdues you at once. Her little cajoleries —those small nothings of voice, and look, and touch—are such subtle tempters for one admired even to homage itself.

"You must be my escort, Doddy," said she, drawing on her glove, after fascinating me by the sight of that dimpled hand, and those rose-tipped fingers, so full of their own memories for me. "You shall give me your arm, and I'll tell you who every one is." And away we sailed out of the supper-room into the crowded salons.

Our progress was slow, for the crush was tremendous; but, as we went, her recognitions were frequent. Still, I could not but remark, not with women. All, or nearly all, her acquaintances were of, I was going to say the harder, but upon my life I believe the real epithet would be the softer sex. They saluted her with an easy, almost too easy, familiarity. Some only smiled, and one, a scoundrel—I shall know him again, however—threw up his eyes with a particular glance towards me, as plainly as possible implying, "Oh, another victim, eh?" As for the ladies, some stared full at her, and then turned abruptly away; some passed without looking; one or two made her low and formal curtseys; and a few put up their glasses to scan her lace flounce or her lappets, as if *they* were really the great objects to be admired. At last we came to a knot of men talking in a circle round a very pretty woman, whose jet-black eyes and ringlets, with a high colour, gave her a most brilliant appearance. The moment she saw Mrs. G. H. she sprang from her seat to embrace her. They spoke in French, and so rapidly, that I could catch nothing of what passed; but the dark eyes were suddenly darted towards me with a piercing glance, that made me half ashamed.

"Let us take possession of that sofa," said Mrs. Gore, moving towards one. "And now, Doddy, I want to present you to my dearest friend on earth, my own darling Georgina."

Then they both kissed, and I muttered some stupid nonsense of my own.

"This, Georgy—this is that dear creature of whom you have heard me speak so often; this is that generous, noble-hearted soul whose devotion is written upon my heart; and this," said she, turning to the other side, "this is my more than sister—my adored Georgina!"

I took my place between them on the sofa, and was formally presented to

whom?—guess you? No less a person than Lady George Tiverton! Ay, Tom, the fascinating creature with the dark orbs was another injured woman! I was not to be treated like a common acquaintance, it seemed, for "Georgy" began a recital of her husband's cruelties to me. Of all the wretches I ever heard or read he went far beyond them. There was not an indignity, not an outrage he had not passed on her. He studied cruelties to inflict upon her. She had been starved, beaten, bruised, and, I believe, chained to a log.

She drew down her dress to show me some mark of cruelty on her shoulder; and though I saw nothing to shock me, I took her word for the injury. In fact, Tom, I was lost in wonderment how one that had gone through so much not only retained the loveliness of her looks, but all the fascinations of her beauty, unimpaired by any traits of suffering.

What a terrible story it was, to be sure. Now, he had sold her diamonds to a Jew; now, he had disposed of her beautiful dark hair to a wig-maker. In his reckless extravagance her very teeth were not safe in her head; but more dreadful than all were the temptations he had exposed her to - sweet, young, artless, and lovely as she was! All the handsome fellows about town —all that was gay, dashing, and attractive—the young Peerage and the Blues —all at her feet; but her saint-like purity triumphed; and it was really quite charming to hear how these two pretty women congratulated each other on all the perils they had passed through unharmed, and the dangers through which virtue had borne them triumphant. There I sat, Tom, almost enveloped in gauze and Valenciennes—for their wide flounces encompassed me, their beauteous faces at either side, their soft breath fanning me—listening to tales of man's infamy that made my blood boil. To the excitement of the champagne had succeeded the delirious intoxication compounded of passionate indignation and glowing admiration; and at any minute I felt ready to throw myself at the heads of the husbands or the feet of their wives!

Vast crowds moved by us as we sat there, and I could perceive that we were by no means unnoticed by the company. At last I perceived an elderly lady, leaning on a young man's arm, whom I thought I recognised; but she quickly averted her head, and said something to her companion. He turned and bowed coldly to me; and I perceived it was Morris—or Penrhyn, I suppose he calls himself now; and, indeed, his new dignity would seem to have completely overcome him. Mrs. G. H. asked his name; and when I told it, said she would permit me to present him to her—a liberty I had no intention to profit by.

The company was now thinning fast; and so, giving an arm to each of my fair friends, we descended to the cloaking-room. "Call our carriage, Doddy —the Villino Amaldini! for Georgy and I go together," said Mrs. G. I saw them to the door, helped them in, kissed their hands, promised to call on

them early on the morrow—"Villa Amaldini—Via Amaldini"—got the name by heart; another squeeze of the two fair hands, and away they rolled, and I turned homeward in a frame of mind of which I have not courage to attempt the description.

When I arrived at our lodgings it was nigh three o'clock; Mary Anne and Cary were both sitting up waiting for me. The police had made a descent on the house in my absence, and carried away three hundred and seventy copies of the blessed little tract, all our house bills, some of your letters, and the girls' Italian exercises; a very formidable array of correspondence, to which some equations in algebra, by James, contributed the air of a cypher.

"Well, Papa, what tidings?" cried both the girls, as I entered the room. "When is she to be liberated? What says the Minister?—is he outrageous?—was he civil?—did he show much energy?"

"Wait a bit, my dears," said I, "and let me collect myself. After all I have gone through, my head is none of the clearest."

This was quite true, Tom, as you may readily believe. They both waited, accordingly, with a most exemplary patience; and there we sat in silence confronting each other; and I own to you honestly, a criminal in a dock never had a worse conscience than myself at that moment.

"Girls," said I, at last, "if I am to have brains to carry me through this difficult negotiation, it will only be by giving me the most perfect peace and tranquillity. No questioning—no interrogation—no annoyance of any kind—you understand me—this," said I, touching my forehead—"this must be undisturbed." They both looked at each other without speaking, and I went on; but what I said, and how I said it, I have no means of knowing: I dashed intrepidly into the wide sea of European politics, mixing up Mrs. D. with Mazzini, making out something like a very strong case against her. From that I turned to Turkey and the Danubian Provinces, and brought in Omer Pasha and the Earl of Guzeberry; plainly showing that their mother was a wronged and injured woman, and that Sir Somebody Dundas might be expected any moment at the mouth of the Arno, to exact redress for her wrongs. "And now," said I, winding up, "you know as much of the matter as I do, my dears; you view things from the same level as myself; and so, off to bed, and we'll resume the consideration of the subject in the morning." I didn't wait for more, but took my candle and departed.

"Poor Papa!" said Mary Anne, as I closed the door; "he talks quite wildly. This sad affair has completely affected his mind."

"He certainly *does* talk most incoherently," said Cary; "I hope we shall find him better in the morning." Ah! Tom, I passed a wretched night of self-accusation and sorrow. There was nothing Mrs. D. herself could have said to me that I didn't say. I called myself a variety of the hardest names,

and inveighed stoutly against my depravity and treachery. The consequence was, that I couldn't sleep a wink, and rose early, to try and shake off my feverish state by a walk.

I sallied out into the streets, and half unconsciously took the way to the prison. It was one of those old feudal fortresses—half-gaol, half-palace—that the Medici were so fond of—grim-looking, narrow-windowed, high-battlemented buildings, that stand amidst modern edifices as a mailed knight might stand in a group of our every-day dandies. I looked up at its dark and sullen front with a heavy and self-reproaching heart. "Your wife is there, Kenny Dodd," said I, "a prisoner!—treated like a malefactor and a felon!—carried away by force, without trial or investigation, and already sentenced—for a prisoner is under sentence when even passingly deprived of liberty—and there you stand, powerless and inactive! For this you quitted a land where there is at least a law, and the appeal to it open to every one! For this you have left a country where personal liberty can be assailed neither by tyranny nor corruption! For this you have come hundreds of miles away from home, to subject yourself and those belonging to you to the miserable despotism of petty tyrants and the persecution of bigots! Why don't they print it in large letters in every passport what one has to expect in these journeyings? What nonsense it is to say that Kenny Dodd is to travel at his pleasure, and that the authorities themselves are neither to give nor 'permettre qu'il lui soit donné empêchement quelconque, mais au contraire toute aide et assistance!' Why not be frank, and say, 'Kenny Dodd comes abroad at his own proper risk and peril, to be cheated in Belgium, bamboozled in Holland, and blackguarded on the Rhine; with full liberty to be robbed in Spain, imprisoned in Italy, and knouted in Russia?' With a few such facts as these before you, you would think twice on the Tower-stairs, and perhaps deliberate a little at Dover. It's no use making a row because foreigners do not adopt our notions. They have no Habeas Corpus, just as they have no London stout—maybe for the same reason, too—it wouldn't suit the climate. But what brings us amongst them? There's the question. Why do we come so far away from home to eat food that disagrees with us, and live under laws we cry out against? Is it consistent with common sense to run a muck through the statutes of foreign nations just out of wilfulness? I wish my wife was out of that den, and I wish we were all back in Dodsborough." And with that wise reflection, uttered in all the fulness of my heart, I turned slowly away and reached the Arno. A gentleman raised his hat politely to me as I passed. I turned hastily, and saw it was Morris. His salute was a cold one, and showed no inclination for nearer acquaintance; but I was too much humiliated in my own esteem to feel pride, so I followed and overtook him. His reception of me was so chilling, Tom, that even before I spoke I regretted the step I had adopted. I

rallied, however, and after reminding him how on a former occasion I had been benefited by his able intervention in my behalf, briefly told him of Mrs. D.'s arrest, and the great embarrassment I felt as to the course to be taken.

He thawed in a moment. All his distance was at once abandoned, and, kindly offering me his arm, begged me to relate what had occurred. He listened calmly, patiently—I might almost say, coldly. He never dropped a sentence—not a syllable like sympathy or condolence. He hadn't as much as a word of honest indignation against the outrageous behaviour of the authorities. In fact, Tom, he took the whole thing just as much as a matter of course, as if there was nothing remarkable nor strange in imprisoning an Englishwoman, and the mother of a family. He made a few pencil notes in his pocket-book as to dates and such-like, and then, looking at his watch, said:

"We'll go and breakfast with Dunthorpe. You know him intimately, don't you?"

I had to confess I did not know him at all.

"Oh! seeing you there last night," said he, "I thought you knew him well, as you are only a very short time in Florence."

I drew a long breath, Tom, and told him how I had happened to find myself at the Minister's "rout." He smiled good-humouredly; there was nothing offensive in it, however, and it passed off at once.

"Sir Alexander and I are old friends," said he. "We served in the same regiment once together, and I can venture to present you, even at this early hour;" and with that we walked briskly on towards the Legation.

All this while Morris—I can't call him by his new name yet—never alluded to the family; he didn't even ask after James, and I plainly saw that he was bent on doing a very good-natured thing, without any desire to incur further intimacy as its consequence.

Sir Alexander had not left his room when we arrived, but on receiving Morris's card sent word to say he should be down in a moment, and expected us both at breakfast. The table was spread in a handsome library, with every possible appliance of comfort about it. There was a brisk wood fire blazing on the ample hearth, and a beautiful Blenheim asleep before it. Newspapers of every country and every language lay scattered about with illustrated journals and prints. Most voluptuous easy-chairs and fat-cushioned sofas abounded, and it was plain to see that the world has some rougher sides than she turns to her Majesty's Envoys and Ministers Plenipotentiary!

I was busy picturing to myself what sort of person the present occupant of this post was likely to prove, when he entered. A tall, very good-looking man, of about forty, with bushy whiskers of white hair; his air and bearing the very type of frankness, and his voice the rich tone of a manly speaker.

He shook me cordially by the hand as Morris introduced me, apologised for keeping us waiting, and at once seated us at table. A sickly-looking lad, with sore eyes and a stutter, slipped unobtrusively in after him, and he was presented to us as Lord Adolphus de Maudley, the unpaid *Attaché*.

Leaving all to Morris, and rightly conjecturing that he would open the subject we came upon at the fitting time, I attacked a grouse-pie most vigorously, and helped myself freely to his Excellency's Bordeaux. There were all manner of good things, and we did them ample justice, even to the Unpaid himself, who certainly seemed to take out in prog what they denied him in salary.

Sir Alexander made all the running, as to talk. He rattled away about Turks and Russians—affairs home and foreign—the Ministry and the Opposition—who was to go next to some vacant embassy, and who was to be the prima donna at the Pergola. Then came Florence gossip—an amusing chapter; but perhaps—as they say in the police reports—not quite fit for publication. His Excellency had seen the girls at the races, and complimented me on their good looks, and felicitated the city on the accession of so much beauty. At last Morris broke ground, and related the story of Mrs. D.'s captivity. Sir Alex—who had by this time lighted his cigar—stood with his hands in his dressing-gown pockets, and his back to the fire, the most calm and impassive of listeners.

"They are so stupid, these people," said he at last, puffing his weed between each word; "won't take the trouble to look before them—won't examine—won't investigate—a charge. Mrs. Dodd a Catholic, too?"

"A most devout and conscientious one!" said I.

"Great bore for the moment, no doubt; but—try a cheroot, they're milder—but, as I was saying, to be amply recompensed hereafter. There's nothing they won't do in the way of civility and attention to make amends for this outrage."

"Meanwhile, as to her liberation?" said Morris.

"Ah! that *is* a puzzle. No use writing to Ministers, you know. That's all lost time. Official correspondence—only invented to train up our youth—like Lord Dolly, there. Must try what can be done with Bradelli."

"And who is Bradelli, your Excellency?"

"Bradelli is Private Secretary to the Cardinal Boncelli, at Rome."

"But we are in Tuscany."

"Geographically speaking, so we are. But leave it to me, Mr. Dodd. No time shall be lost. Draw up a note, Dolly, to the Prince Cigalaroso. You have a mem. in the Chancellerie will do very well. The English are always in scrapes, and it is always the same: 'Mon cher Prince,—Je regrette infiniment que mes devoirs m'imposent,' &c. &c., with a full account of the 'fâcheux incident'—that's the phrase, mind that, Dolly; do everything

necessary for the Blue Book, and in the mean while take care that Mrs. D. is out of prison before the day is over."

I was surprised to find how little Sir Alexander cared for the real facts of the case, or the gross injustice of the entire proceeding. In fact, he listened to my explanations on this head with as much impatience as could consist with his unquestionable good breeding, simply interpolating as I went on: "Ah, very true;" "Your observation is quite correct;" "Perfectly just," and so on. "Can you dine here to-day, Mr. Dodd?" said he, as I finished; "Penhryn is coming, and a few other friends."

I had some half scruples about accepting a dinner invitation while my wife remained a prisoner, but I thought, "after all, the Minister must be the best judge of such a point," and accordingly said "Yes." A most agreeable dinner it was too, Tom. A party of seven at a round table, admirably served, and with—what I assure you is growing rather a rarity now-a-days—a sufficiency of wine.

The Minister himself proved most agreeable; his long residence abroad had often brought him into contact with amusing specimens of his own countrymen, some of whose traits and stories he recounted admirably, showing me that the Dodds are only the species of a very widely extended and well-appreciated genus.

I own to you that I heard, with no small degree of humiliation, how prone we English are to demand money compensations for the wrongs inflicted upon us by foreign Governments. As the information came from a source I cannot question, I have only to accept the fact, and deplore it.

As a nation, we are assuredly neither mean nor mercenary. As individuals, I sincerely hope and trust we can stand comparison in all that regards liberality of purse with any people. Yet how comes it that we have attained to an almost special notoriety for converting our sorrows into silver, and making our personal injuries into a credit at our banker's? I half suspect that the tone imparted to the national mind by our Law Courts is the true reason of this, and that our actions for damages are the damaging features of our character as a people. The man who sees no indignity in taking the price of his dishonour, will find little difficulty in appraising the value of an insult to his liberty. Take my word for it, Tom, it is a very hard thing to make foreigners respect the institutions of a country stained with this reproach, or believe that a people can be truly high-minded and high-spirited who have recourse to such indemnities.

From what fell from Sir Alexander on this subject, I could plainly perceive the embarrassment a Minister must labour under, who, while asserting the high pretensions of a great nation, is compelled to descend to such ignoble bargains; and I only wish that the good public at home, as they pore over Blue Books, would take into account this very considerable difficulty.

As regards foreign Governments themselves, it is right to bear in mind that they rarely or never can be induced to believe the transgressions of individuals as anything but parts of a grand and comprehensive scheme of English interference. If John Bull smuggle a pound of tea, it is immediately set down that England is going to alter the Custom Laws. Let him surreptitiously steal his fowling-piece over the frontier, and we are accused of "arming the disaffected population." A copy of a tract is construed into a treatise on Socialism: and a "Jim-Crow" hat is the symbol of Republican doctrines.

I see the full absurdity of these suspicions, but I wish, for our own comfort's sake, to take no higher ground, that we were somewhat more circumspect in our conduct abroad. "Rule Britannia" is a very fine tune, and nobody likes to hear it, well sung, better than myself; but this I will say, Tom, "Britons *ever* will be slaves" to their prejudices and self-delusions, until they come to see that *their* notions of right and wrong are not universal, and that there is no more faulty impression than to suppose an English standard of almost anything applicable to people who have scarcely a thought, a feeling, or even a prejudice in common with us.

One might almost fancy that the travelling Englishman loved a scrape from the pleasure it afforded him of addressing his Minister, and making a fuss in the *Times*. Just as a fellow who knew he had a cork jacket under his waistcoat might take pleasure in falling overboard and attracting public attention, without incurring much risk.

While we were discussing these and such-like topics, there came a note from James to say that Mrs. Dodd had just been liberated, and was then safe in what is popularly called the bosom of her family. I accordingly arose and thanked Sir Alexander most heartily for his kind and successful interference; and though I should not have objected to another glass or two of his admirable port, I felt it was only decent and becoming in me to hasten home to my wife.

As Morris had shown so much good-nature in the affair, and had—formerly at least—been on very friendly terms with us, I asked him to come along with me; but he declined, with a kind of bashful reserve that I could not comprehend; and so, half offended at his coldness, I wished him a "good night," and departed.

I have now only to add, that I found Mrs. D. in good health and spirits, and, on the whole, rather pleased with the incident than otherwise. You shall hear from me again ere long, and meanwhile, believe me,

Your ever faithful friend,

KENNY JAMES DODD.

## LETTER XXXVI.

MRS. DODD TO MRS. GALLAGHER, DODSBOROUGH.

Casa Dodd, Florence.

MY DEAR MOLLY,—So you tell me that the newspapers is full of me, and that nothing is talked of but "the case of Mrs. Dodd" and her "cruel incarnation in the dungeons of Tuscany." I wish they'd keep their sympathies to themselves, Molly, for to tell you a secret, this same captivity has done us the greatest service in the world. Here we are, my darling, at the top of the tree—going to all the balls—dining out every day—and treated with what they call the most distinguished consideration. And I must say, Molly, that of all the cities ever I seen, Florence is the most to my taste. There's a way of living here—I can't explain how it is done exactly—but everybody has just what he likes of everything. I believe it's the bankers does it—that they have a way of exchanging, or discounting, or whatever it is called, that makes every one at their ease; and, indeed, my only surprise is why everybody doesn't come to live in a place with so many advantages. Even K. I. has ceased grumbling about money matters, and for the last three weeks we have really enjoyed ourselves. To be sure, now and then, he mumbles about "as well to be hanged for a sheep as a lamb;" and this morning he said that he was "too old to beg," to "dig he was ashamed." "I hope you are," says I; "it isn't in your station in life that you can go out as a navvy, and with your two daughters the greatest beauties in the town." And so they are, Molly. There isn't the like of Mary Anne in the Cascini, and though Caroline won't give herself fair play in the way of dress, there's many thinks she's the prettiest of the two.

I wish you saw the Cascini, Molly, when the carriages all drive up, and get mixed together, so that you would wonder how they'd ever get out again. They are full of elegantly dressed ladies; there's nothing too fine for them, even in the morning, and there they sit, and loll back, with all the young dandies lying about them, on the steps of the carriages, over the splash-boards—indeed, nearly under the wheels—squeezing their hands, looking into their eyes and under their veils. Oh dear, but it seems mighty wicked till you're used to it, and know it's only the way of the place, which one does remarkably soon. The first thing strikes a stranger here, Molly, is, that everybody knows every other body most intimately. It's all "Carlo," "Luigi,"

"Antonio mio," with hands clasped or arms about each other, and everlasting kissing between the women. And then, Molly, when you see a newly-arrived English family in the midst of them, with a sulky father, a stiff mother, three stern young ladies, and a stupid boy of sixteen, you think them the ugliest creatures on earth, and don't rightly know whether to be angry or laugh at them.

Lord George says that the great advantage of the Cascini is, that you hear there "all that's going on." Faith you do, Molly, and nice goings on it is! The Florentines say they've no liberty. I'd like to know how much more they want, for if they haven't it by right, Molly, they take it at all events, and with everybody, too. The creatures, all rings and chains, beards and moustaches, come up to the side of your carriage, put up their opera-glasses, and stare at you as if you was a waxwork! Then they begin to discuss you, and almost fall out about the colour of your hair or your eyes, till one, bolder than the rest, comes up close to you, and decides what is, maybe, a wager! It's all very trying at first—not but Mary Anne bears it beautifully, and seems never to know that she is standing under a battery of fifty pair of eyes!

As to James, it's all Paradise. He knows all the beauties of the town already, and I see him with his head into a brougham there, and his legs dangling out of a phaeton here, just as if he was one of the family. You may think, Molly, when they begin that way of a morning, what it is when they come to the evening! If they're all dear friends in the daylight, it's brothers and sisters—no, but husbands and wives—they become when the lamps are lighted! Whether they walk or waltz, whether they hand you to a seat or offer you an ice, they've an art to make it a particular attention—and, as it were, put you under an obligation for it; and whether you like it or not, Molly, you are made out in their debt, and woe to you when they discover you're a defaulter!

I'm sure, without Lord George's advice, we couldn't have found the right road to the high society of this place so easily; but he told K. I. at once what to do—and, for a wonder, Molly, he did it. Florence, says he, is like no other capital in Europe. In all the others there is a circle, more or less wide, of what assumes to be "the world;" there every one is known, his rank, position, and even his fortune. Now in Florence, people mix as they do at a Swiss table d'hôte; each talks to his neighbour, perfectly aware that *he* may be a blackleg, or she—if it be a she—something worse. That society is agreeable, pleasant, and brilliant, is the best refutation to all the cant one hears about freedom of manners, and so on. And, as Lord G. observes, it is manifestly a duty with the proper people to mingle with the naughty ones, since it is only in this way they can hope to reclaim them. "Take those two charming girls of yours into the world here, Mrs. D.," said he to me the

other day; "show the folks that beauty, grace, and fascination are all compatible with correct principles and proper notions; let them see that you yourself, so certain of attracting admiration, are not afraid of its incense; say to society, as it were, 'Here we are, so secure of ourselves that we can walk unharmed through all the perils around us, and enjoy health and vigour with the plague on every side of us.'" And that's what we're doing, Molly. As Lord George says, "we're diffusing our influence," and I've no doubt we'll see the results before long.

I wish I was as sure of K. I.'s goings on; but Betty tells me that he constantly receives letters of a morning, and hurries out immediately after; that he often drives away late at night in a hackney-coach, and doesn't return till nigh morning! I'm only waiting for him to buy us a pair of carriage-horses to be at him about this behaviour; and, indeed, I think he's trying to push me on to it, to save him from the expense of the horses. I must tell you, Molly, that next to having no character, the most fashionable thing here is a handsome coach; and, indeed, without something striking in that way, you can't hope to take society by storm. With a phaeton and a pair of blood bays, James says, you can drive into Prince Walleykoffsky's drawing-room; with a team of four, you can trot them up the stairs of the Pitti Palace.

After a coach, comes your cook; and isn't my heart broke trying them! We've had a round of "experimental dinners," that has cost us a little fortune, since each "*chef*" that came was free to do what he pleased, without regard to the cost, and an eatable morsel never came to the table all the while. Our present artist is Monsieur Chardron, who goes out to market in a brougham, and buys a turkey with kid gloves on him. He won't cook for us except on company days, but leaves us to his "*aide*," as he calls him, whom K. I. likes best, for he condescends to give us a bit of roast meat, now and then, that has really nourishment in it. We're now, therefore, in a state to open the campaign. We've an elegant apartment—a first rate cook—a capital courier—and next week we're to set up a chasseur, if K. I. will only consent to be made a Count.

You may stare, Molly, when I tell you that he fights against it as if it was the Court of Bankruptcy; though Lord George worked night and day to have it done. There never was the like of it for cheapness; a trifle over twenty pounds clears the whole expense; and for that he would be Count Dodd, of Fiezole, with a title to each of the children. As many thousands wouldn't do that in England; and, indeed, one doesn't wonder at the general outcry of the expense of living there, when the commonest luxuries are so costly. Mary Anne and I are determined on it, and before the month is over your letters will be addressed to a Countess.

In the middle of all this happiness, my dear, there is a drop of bitter, as there always is in the cup of life, though you may do your best not to taste

it. Indeed, if it wasn't for this drawback, Florence would be a place I'd like to live and die in. What I allude to is this: here we are between two fires, Molly—the Morrises on one side, and Mrs. Gore Hampton on the other—both watching, scrutinising, and observing us, for, as bad luck would have it, they both settled down here for the winter! Now, the Morrises know all the quiet, well-behaved, respectable people, that one ought to be acquainted with, just for decency's sake. But Mrs. G. H. is in the fashionable and fast set, where all the fun is going on; and from what I can learn them's the very people would suit us best. Being in neither camp, we hear nothing but the abuse and scandal that each throws on the other; and, indeed, to do them justice, if half of it was true, there's few of them ought to escape hanging!

That's how we stand; and can you picture to yourself a more embarrassing situation? for you see that many of the slow people are high in station and of real rank, while some of the fast are just the reverse. Lord George says, "Cut the fogies, and come amongst the fast 'uns;" and talks about making friends with the "Mammoth of unrighteousness;" and if he means Mrs. G. H., I believe he isn't far wrong: but even if we consented, Molly, I don't know whether she'd make up with us; though Lord George swears that he'll answer for it with his head. One thing is clear, Molly, we must choose between them, and that soon, too; for it's quite impossible to be "well with the Treasury and the Opposition also."

K. I. affects neutrality, just to blind us to his real intentions; but I know him well, and see plainly what he's after. Cary fights hard for her friends; though, to say the truth, they haven't taken the least notice of her since they came to their fortune—the very thing I expected from them, Molly, for it's just the way with all upstarts! Now you see some of the difficulties that attend even the highest successes in life; and maybe it will make you more contented with your own obscurity. Perhaps, before this reaches you, we'll have decided for one or the other; for, as Lord G. says, you can't pass your life between silly and crabbed.*

There's another thing fretting me, besides, Molly. It is what this same Lord George means about Mary Anne; for it's now more than six months since he grew particular; and yet there's nothing come of it yet. I see it's preying on the girl herself, too—and what's to be done? I am sure I often think of what poor old Jones M'Carthy used to say about this: "If I'd a family o' daughters," says he, "I'd do just as I manage with the horses when I want to sell one of them. There they are—look at them as long as you like in the stable, but I'll have no taking them out for a trial, and trotting them here, and cantering them there; and then, a fellow coming to tell me that they have this, that, and the other." And the more I think of it, Molly,

* Does Mrs. D. mean Scylla and Charybdis.—Ed. *of Dodd Correspondence.*

the more I'm convinced it's the right way; though it's too late, maybe, to help it now.

As I mean to send you another letter soon, I'll close this now, wishing you all the compliments of the season, except chilblains, and remain your true and affectionate friend,

JEMIMA DODD.

P.S.—You'd better direct your next letter to us, "Casa Dodd," for I remark that all the English here try and get rid of the Italian names to the houses as soon as they can.

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## LETTER XXXVII.

JAMES DODD TO ROBERT DOOLAN, ESQ., TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.

Florence.

MY DEAR BOB,—If you only knew how difficult it is to obtain even five minutes of quiet leisure in this same capital, you'd at once absolve me from all the accusations in your last letter. It is pleasure at a railroad pace, from morning till night, and from night till morning. Perhaps, after all, it is best there should be no time for reflection, since it would be like one waiting on the rails for an express train to run over him!

I can give you no better nor speedier illustration of the kind of life we lead here, than by saying that even the Governor has felt the fascination of the place, and goes the pace, signing cheques and drawing bills without the slightest hesitation, or any apparent sense of a coming responsibility. He plays, too, and loses his money freely, and, altogether, comports himself as if he had a most liberal income, or—terrible alternative—not a sixpence in the world. I own to you, Bob, that this recklessness affrights me far more than all his former grumbling over our expensive and wasteful habits. He seems to have adopted it, too, with a certain method that gives it all the appearance of a plan, though I confess what possible advantage could redound from it is utterly beyond my power of calculation.

Meanwhile, our style of living is on a scale of splendour that might well suit the most ample fortune. Tiverton says that for a month or two this is absolutely necessary, and that in society, as in war, it is the first dash often decides a campaign. And really even my own brief experience of the world

shows that one's friends, as they are conventionally called, are far more interested in the skill of your cook than in the merits of your own character; and that he who has a good cellar may indulge himself in the luxury of a very bad conscience. You of course suspect that I am now speaking of a class of people dubious both in fortune and position, and who have really no right to scrutinise too closely the characters of those with whom they associate. Quite the reverse, Bob. I am actually alluding to our very best and most correct English, and who would not for worlds do at home any one of the hundred transgressions they commit abroad. For instance, we have in this goodly capital of debt and divorce celebrity, a certain house of almost princely splendour; the furniture, plate, pictures, all perfection; the cook, an artist that once pampered royal palates; in a word, everything, from the cellar to the conservatory, a miracle of correct taste. The owner of all this magnificence is—what think you?—a successful swindler!—the hero of a hundred bubble speculations—the spoliator of some thousands of shareholders—a fellow whose infractions have been more than once stigmatised by public prosecution, and whose rascalities are of European fame! You'd say, that with all these detracting influences he was a man of consummate social tact, refined manners, and at least possessing the outward signs of good breeding. Wrong again, Bob. He is coarse, uneducated, and vulgar; he never picked up any semblance of the class from whom he peculated; and has lived on as he begun, a "low comedy villain," and no more. Well, what think you when I tell you that is "*the* house," *par excellence*, where all strangers strive to be introduced—that to be on the dinner-list here is a distinction, and that even a visitor enjoys an envied fortune—and that at the very moment I write the Dodd family are in earnest and active negotiation to attain to this inestimable privilege? Now, Bob, there's no denying that there must be something rotten, and to the core, too, where such a condition of things prevails. If this man fed the hungry and sheltered the houseless, who had no alternative but his table, or no food, the thing requires no explanation; or if his hospitalities were partaken of by that large floating class who in every city are to be found, with tastes disproportionate to their fortunes, and who will at any time postpone their principles to their palates, even then the matter is not of difficult solution; but what think you that his company includes some of the very highest names of our stately nobility, and that the titles that resound through his *salon* are amongst the most honoured of our haughty aristocracy! These people assuredly stand in no want of a dinner. They are comfortably lodged, and at least reasonably well fed, at the "Italie," or the "Grande Bretagne." Why should they stoop to such companionship? Who can explain this, Bob? Assuredly I am not the Œdipus!

I am nothing surprised that people like ourselves, for instance, seek to

enjoy even this passing splendour, and find themselves at a princely board, served with a more than royal costliness. One of these grand dinners is like a page of the Arabian Nights to a man of ordinary condition; but surely his Grace the Duke, or the most Noble the Marquis, has no such illusions. With *him* it is only a question whether the Madeira over-flavoured the soup, or that the ortolans might possibly have been fatter. *He* dines pretty much in the same fashion every day during the London season, and a great part of the rest of the year afterwards. Why then should he descend to any compromise to accept Count "Dragonards'" hospitality? for I must tell you that "Dives" is a Count, and has orders from the Pope and the Queen of Spain.

With the explanation, as I have said, I have nothing to do. It is beyond and above me. For the fact alone I am guarantee; and here comes Tiverton in a transport of triumph to say that "Heaven is won," or in humbler phrase, "Monsieur le Comte de Dragonards prie l'honneur," &c., and that Dodd *père* and Dodd *mère* are requested to dine with him on Tuesday. The younger Dodds to assist at a reception in the evening.

Tiverton assures me that by accepting with a good grace the humble part of a "refresher," I am certain of promotion afterwards to a higher range of character; and in this hope I live for the present.

It is likely I shall not despatch this without being able to tell you more of this great man's house; meanwhile—"majora cantamus"—I am in love, Bob! If I didn't dash into the confession at once, as one springs into the sea of a chilly morning, I'd even put on the clothes of secrecy, and walk off unconfessed. She is lovely, beyond anything I can give you an idea of pale as marble; but such a flesh tint! a sunset sleeping upon snow, and with lids fringed over a third of her cheek. You know the tender, languid, longing look that vanquishes me—that's exactly what she has! A glance of timid surprise, like an affrighted fawn, and then a downcast consciousness—a kind of self-reproaching sense of her own loveliness—a sort of a—what the devil kind of enchantment and witchery, Bob? that makes a man feel it's all no use struggling and fighting—that his doom is *there!* that the influence which is to rule his destiny is before him, and that turn him which way he will, his heart has but one road—and *will* take it!

She was in Box 19, over the orchestra! I caught a glimpse of her shoulder—only her shoulder—at first, as she sat with her face to the stage, and a huge screen shaded her from the garish light of the lustre. How I watched the graceful bend of her neck each time she saluted—I suppose it was salutation—some new visitor who entered. The drooping leaves and flowers of her hair trembled with a gentle motion, as if to the music of her soft voice. I thought I could hear the very accents echoing within my heart! But oh!

my ecstasy when her hand stole forth and hung listlessly over the cushion of the box! True it was gloved, yet still you could mark its symmetry, and, in fancy, picture the rosy-tipped fingers in all their graceful beauty.

Night after night I saw her thus; yet never more than I have told you. I made superhuman efforts to obtain the box directly in front; but it belonged to a Russian Princess, and was, therefore, inaccessible. I bribed the bassoon and seduced the oboe in the orchestra; but nothing was to be seen from their inferno of discordant tunings. I made love to a ballet-dancer, to secure the *entrée* behind the scenes; and, on the night of my success, *she*—my adored one—had changed her place with a friend, and sat with her back to the stage. The adverse fates had taken a spite against me, Bob, and I saw that my passion must prove unhappy! Somehow it is in love as in hunting, you are never really in earnest so long as the country is open and the fences easy; but once that the ditches are "yawners," and the walls "raspers," you sit down to your work with a resolute heart and a steady eye, determined, at any cost and at any peril, to be in at the death. Would that the penalties were alike also! How gladly would I barter a fractured rib, or a smashed col[illegible]-bone, for the wrecked and cast-away spirit of my lost and broken heart!

If I suffer myself to expand upon my feelings, there will be no end of this, Bob. I already have a kind of consciousness that I could fill three hundred and fifty folio volumes, like "Hansard's," in subtle description and discrimination of sensations that were not exactly "*this*," but were very like "*that*;" and of impressions, hopes, fancies, fears, and visions, a thousand times more real than all the actual events of my *bonâ fide* existence. And, after all, what balderdash it is to compare the little meaningless incidents of our lives with the soul-stirring passions that rage within us! the thoughts that, so to say, form the very fuel of our natures! These are, indeed, the realities; and what we are in the habit of calling such, are the mere mockeries and semblances of fact! I can honestly aver that I suffered—in the true sense of the word—more intense agony from the conflict of my distracted feelings than I ever did when lying under the pangs of a compound fracture; and I may add of a species of pain not to be alleviated by anodynes and soothed by hot flannels.

To be brief, Bob, I felt that, though I had often caught slight attacks of the malady, at length I had contracted it in its deadliest form—a regular "blue case," as they say, with bad symptoms from the start. Has it ever struck you that a man may go through every stage of a love fever without even so much as speaking to the object of his affections? I can assure you that the thing is true, and I myself suffered nightly every vacillating sense of Hope, Fear, Ecstasy, Despair, Joy, Jealousy, and frantic Delight, just by following out the suggestions of my own fancy, and exalting into importance the veriest trifles of the hour.

With what gloomy despondence did I turn homeward of an evening, when she sat back in the box, and perhaps nothing of her but her bouquet was visible for a whole night!—with what transports have I carried away the memory of her profile, seen but for a second! Then the agonies of my jealousy, as I saw her listening, with pleased attention, to some essenced puppy—I could swear it was such—who lounged into her box before the ballet! But at last came the climax of my joy, when I saw her "lorgnette" directed towards me, as I stood in the pit, and actually felt her eyes on me! I can imagine some old astronomer's ecstasy, as, gazing for hours on the sky of night, the star that he has watched and waited for, has suddenly shone through the glass of his telescope, and lit up his very heart within him with its radiance. I'd back myself to have experienced a still more thrilling sense of happiness as the beams of her bright eyes descended on me.

At first, Bob, I thought that the glances might have been meant for another. I turned and looked around me, ready to fasten a deadly quarrel upon him, whom I should have regarded at once as my greatest enemy. But the company amidst which I stood soon reassured me. A few snuffy-looking old Counts, with brown wigs and unshaven chins—a stray Government-clerk with a pinchbeck chain and a weak moustache, couldn't be my rivals. I looked again, but she had turned away her head; and save that the "lorgnette" still rested within her fingers, I'd have thought the whole a vision.

Three nights after this the same thing occurred. I had taken care to resume the very same place each evening, to wear the same dress, to stand in the very same attitude—a very touching "pose"—which I had practised before the glass. I had not been more than two hours at my post, when she turned abruptly round and stared full at me. There could be no mistake—no misconception whatever; for, as if to confirm my wavering doubts, her friend took the glass from her, and looked full and long at me. You may imagine, Bob, somewhat of the preoccupation of my faculties when I tell you that I never so much as recognised her friend. I had thoughts, eyes, ears, and senses for one—and one only. Judge then my astonishment when she saluted me, giving that little gesture with the hand your Florentines are such adepts in—a species of salutation so full of most expressive meaning.

Short of a crow-quilled billet, neatly endorsed with her name, nothing could have spoken more plainly. It said, in a few words, "Come up here, Jim, we shall be delighted to see you." I accepted the augury, Bob, as we used to say in Virgil, and in less than a minute had forced my passage through the dense crowd of the pit, and was mounting the box stairs, five steps at a spring. "Whose box is No. 19?" said I to an official. "Madame de Goranton," was the reply. Awkward this; never had heard the name before; sounded like French; might be Swiss; possibly Belgian.

No time for debating the point, tapped and entered—several persons

within barring up the passage to the front—suddenly heard a well-known voice, which accosted me most cordially, and, to my intense surprise, saw before me Mrs. Gore Hampton! You know already all about her, Bob, and I need not recapitulate.

"I fancied you were going to pass your life in distant adoration yonder, Mr. Dodd," said she, laughingly, while she tendered her hand for me to kiss. "Adeline, dearest, let me present to you my friend Mr. Dodd." A very cold - an icy recognition was the reply to this speech; and Adeline opened her fan, and said something behind it to an elderly dandy beside her, who laughed, and said, "Parfaitement, ma foi!"

Registering a secret vow to be the death of the antiquated tiger aforesaid, I entered into conversation with Mrs. G. H., who, notwithstanding some unpleasant passages between our families, expressed unqualified delight at the thought of meeting us all once more; inquired after my Mother most affectionately; and asked if the girls were looking well, and whether they rode and danced as beautifully as ever. She made, between times, little efforts to draw her friend into conversation by some allusion to Mary Anne's grace, or Cary's accomplishments; but all in vain. Adeline only met the advances with a cold stare, or a little half smile of most sneering expression. It was not that she was distant and reserved towards me. No, Bob; her manner was downright contemptuous; it was insulting; and yet such was the fascination her beauty had acquired over me, that I could have knelt at her feet in adoration of her. I have no doubt that she saw this. I soon perceived that Mrs. Gore Hampton did. There is a wicked consciousness in a woman's look as she sees a man "hooked," there's no mistaking Her eyes expressed this sentiment now; and, indeed, she did not try to hide it.

She invited me to come home and sup with them. She half tried to make Adeline say a word or two in support of the invitation; but no, she would not even hear it; and when I accepted, she half peevishly declared she had got a bad headache, and would go to bed after the play. I tell you these trivial circumstances, Bob, just that you may fancy how irretrievably lost I was when such palpable signs of dislike could not discourage me. I felt this all—and acutely, too; but somehow with no sense of defeat, but a stubborn, resolute determination to conquer them.

I went back to sup with Mrs. G. H., and Adeline kept her word and retired. There were a few men—foreigners of distinction—but I sat beside the hostess, and heard nothing but praises of that "dear angel." These eulogies were mixed up with a certain tender pity that puzzled me sadly, since they always left the impression that either the angel had done something herself, or some one else had done it towards her, that called for all the most compassionate sentiments of the human heart. As to any chance of her history —who she was—whence she came, and so on—it was quite out of the ques-

tion; you might as well hope for the private life of some aerial spirit that descends in the midst of canvas clouds in a ballet. She was there—to be worshipped, wondered at, and admired, but not to be catechised.

I left Mrs. H 's house at three in the morning—a sadder but scarcely a wiser man. She charged me most solemnly not to mention to any one where I had been—a precaution possibly suggested by the fact that I had lost sixty Napoleons at lansquenet—a game at which I left herself and her friends deeply occupied when I came away. I was burning with impatience for Tiverton to come back to Florence. He had gone down to the Maremma to shoot snipe. For, although I was precluded by my promise from divulging about the supper, I bethought me of a clever stratagem by which I could obtain all the counsel and guidance without any breach of faith, and this was, to take him with me some evening to the pit, station him opposite to No. 19, and ask all about its occupants; he knows everybody, everywhere, so that I should have the whole history of my unknown charmer on the easiest of all terms.

From that day, and that hour, I became a changed creature. The gay follies of my fashionable friends gave me no pleasure. I detested balls. I abhorred theatres. *She* ceased to frequent the Opera. In fact, I gave the most unequivocal proof of my devotion to one by a most sweeping detestation of all the rest of mankind. Amidst my other disasters, I could not remember where Mrs. Gore Hampton lived. We had driven to her house after the theatre; it was a long way off, and seemed to take a very circuitous course to reach, but in what direction I had not the very vaguest notion of. The name of it, too, had escaped me, though she repeated it over several times when I was taking my leave of her. Of course, my omitting to call and pay my respects would subject me to every possible construction of rudeness and incivility, and here was, therefore, another source of irritation and annoyance to me.

My misanthropy grew fiercer. I had passed through the sad stage, and now entered upon the combative period of the disease. I felt an intense longing to have a quarrel with somebody. I frequented cafés, and walked the streets in a battle, murder, and sudden-death humour—frowning at this man, scowling at that. But, have you never remarked, the caprice of Fortune is in this as in all other things? Be indifferent at play, and you are sure to win; show yourself regardless of a woman, and you are certain to hear she wants to make your acquaintance. Go out of a morning in a mood of universal love and philanthropy, and I'll take the odds that you have a duel on your hands before evening.

There was one man in Florence whom I especially desired to fix a quarrel upon—this was Morris, or, as he was now called, Sir Morris Penrhyn. A fellow who unquestionably ought to have had very different claims on my re-

gard, but who now, in this perversion of my feelings, struck me as exactly the man to shoot or be shot by. Don't you know that sensation, Bob, in which a man feels that he must select a particular person, quite apart from any misfortune he is suffering under, and make *him* pay its penalty? It is a species of antipathy that defies all reason, and, indeed, your attempt to argue yourself out of it only serves to strengthen and confirm its hold on you.

Morris and I had ceased to speak when we met; we merely saluted coldly, and with that rigid observance of a courtesy that makes the very easiest prelude to a row, each party standing ready prepared to say "check" whenever the other should chance to make a wrong move. Perhaps I am not justified in saying so much of *him*, but I know that I do not exaggerate my own intentions. I fancied—what will a man not fancy in one of these eccentric stages of his existence?—that Morris saw my purpose, and evaded me. I argued myself into the notion that he was deficient in personal courage, and constructed upon this idea a whole edifice of absurdity.

I am ashamed, even before you, to acknowledge the extent to which my stupid infatuation blinded me; perhaps the best penalty to pay for it is an open confession.

I overtook our valet one morning with a letter in my Governor's hand addressed to Sir Morris Penrhyn, and on inquiring discovered that he and my Father had been in close correspondence for the three days previous. At once I jumped to the conclusion that I was, somehow or other, the subject of these epistles, and in a fit of angry indignation I drove off to Morris's hotel.

When a man gets himself into a thorough passion on account of some supposed injury, which even to himself he is unable to define, his state is far from enviable. When I reached the hotel I was in the hot stage of my anger, and could scarcely brook the delay of sending in my card. The answer was, "Sir Morris did not receive." I asked for pen and ink to write a note, and scribbled something most indiscreet and offensive. I am glad to say that I cannot now remember a line of it. The reply came, that my "note should be attended to," and with this information I issued forth into the street half wild with rage.

I felt that I had given a deadly provocation, and must now look out for some "friend" to see me through the affair. Tiverton was absent, and amongst all my acquaintances I could not pitch upon one to whose keeping I liked to entrust my honour. I turned into several cafés, I strolled into the club, I drove down to the Cascini, but in vain; and at last was walking homeward, when I caught sight of a friendly face from the window of a travelling-carriage that drove rapidly by, and hurrying after, just came up as it stopped at the door of the Hôtel d'Italie.

You may guess my astonishment as I felt my hand grasped cordially by no other than our old neighbour at Bruff, Doctor Belton, the physician of our County Dispensary. Five minutes explained his presence there. He had gone out to Constantinople as the Doctor to our Embassy, and by some piece of good luck and his own deservings to boot, had risen to the post of Private Secretary to the Ambassador, and was selected by him to carry home some very important despatches, to the rightful consideration of which his own presence at the Foreign Office was deemed essential.

Great as was the difference between his former and his present station, it was insignificant in comparison with the change worked in himself. The Country Doctor, of diffident manners and retiring habits, grateful for the small civilities of small patrons, cautiously veiling his conscious superiority under an affected ignorance, was now become a consummate man of the world—calm, easy, and self-possessed. His very appearance had undergone an alteration, and he held himself more erect, and looked not only handsomer but taller. These were the first things that struck me, but as we conversed together, I found him the same hearty, generous fellow I had ever known him, neither elated by his good fortune, nor, what is just as common a fault, contemptuously pretending that it was only one-half of his deserts.

One thing alone puzzled me, it was that he evinced no desire to come and see our family, who had been uniformly kind and good-natured to him; in fact, when I proposed it, he seemed so awkward and embarrassed, that I never pressed my invitation, but changed the topic. I knew that there had been once on a time some passages between my sister Mary Anne and him, and therefore supposed that possibly there might have been something or other that rendered a meeting embarrassing. At all events, I accepted his half apology on the ground of great fatigue, and agreed to dine with him.

What a pleasant dinner it was! He related to me all the story of his life, not an eventful one as regarded incident, but full of those traits which make up interest for an individual. You felt as you listened that it was a thoroughly good fellow was talking to you, and that if he were not to prove successful in life, it was just because his were the very qualities rogues trade on for their own benefit. There was, moreover, a manly sense of independence about him, a consciousness of self-reliance that never approached conceit, but served to nerve his courage and support his spirit, which gave him an almost heroism in my eyes, and I own, too, suggested a most humiliating comparison with my own nature.

I opened my heart freely to him about everything, and in particular about Morris; and although I saw plainly enough that he took very opposite views to mine about the whole matter, he agreed to stop in Florence for a day, and act as my friend in the transaction. This being so far arranged, I started for Carrara, which, being beyond the Tuscan frontier, admits of our meeting

without any risk of interruption—for that it must come to such I am fully determined on. The fact is, Bob, my note is a "stunner," and, as I won't retract, Morris has no alternative but to come out.

I have now given you—at full length, too—the whole history, up to the catastrophe—which perhaps may have to be supplied by another hand. I am here, in this little capital of artists and quarrymen, patiently waiting for Belton's arrival, or at least some despatch, which may direct my future movements. It has been a comfort to me to have the task of this recital, since, for the time at least, it takes me out of brooding and gloomy thoughts; and though I feel that I have made out a poor case for myself, I know that I am pleading to a friendly Court, and a merciful Chief Justice.

They say that in the few seconds of a drowning agony, a man calls up every incident of his life—from infancy to the last moment—that a whole panorama of his existence is unrolled before him, and that he sees himself—child, boy, youth, and man—vividly and palpably: that all his faults, his short-comings, and his transgressions, stand out in strong colours before him, and his character is revealed to him like an inscription. I am half persuaded this may be true, judging from what I have myself experienced within these few hours of solitude here. Shame, sorrow, and regret, are ever present with me. I feel utterly disgraced before the bar of my own conscience. Even of the advantages which foreign travel might have conferred, how few have fallen to my share!—in modern languages I have scarcely made any progress—with respect to works of art I am deplorably ignorant—while in everything that concerns the laws and the modes of government of any foreign state, I have to confess myself totally uninformed. To be sure, I have acquired some insight into the rogueries of "Rouge-et-Noir," I can slang a courier, and even curse a waiter, but I have some misgivings whether these be gifts either to promote a man's fortune or form his character. In fact, I begin to feel that engrafting continental slang upon home "snobbery," is a very unrewarding process, and I sorely fear that I have done very little more than this.

I am in a mood to make a clean breast of it, and perhaps say more than I should altogether like to remember hereafter, so will conclude for the present, and with my most sincere affection, write myself, as ever, yours,

JIM DODD.

P.S.—It is not impossible that you may have a few lines from me by to morrow or next day—at least, if I have anything worth the telling, and "to the fore" to tell it.

## LETTER XXXVIII.

MARY ANNE DODD TO MISS DOOLAN, OF BALLYDOOLAN.

Casa Dodd, Florence.

Dearest Kitty,—Seventeen long and closely-written pages to you—the warm outgushings of my heart—have I just consigned to the flames. They contained the journal of my life in Florence—all my thoughts and hopes, my terrors, my anxieties, and my day-dreams. Why, then, will you say, have they met this fate? I will tell you, Kitty. Of the feelings there recorded—of the emotions depicted—of the very events themselves, nothing absolutely nothing—now remains; and my poor, distracted, forlorn heart no more resembles the buoyant spirit of yesterday, than the blackened embers before me are like the carefully inscribed pages I had once destined for your hand. Pity me, dearest Kitty—pour out every compassionate thought of your kindred heart, and let me feel that, as the wind sweeps over the snowy Apennines, it bears the tender sighs of your affection to one who lives but to be loved! But a week ago, and what a world was opening before me—a world brilliant in all that makes life a triumph! We were launched upon the sunny sea of high society; our "argosy" a noble and stately ship; and now, Kitty, we lie stranded, shattered, and shipwrecked.

Do not expect from me any detailed account of our disasters. I am unequal to the task. It is not at the moment of being cast away that the mariner can recount the story of his wreck. Enough if these few lines be like the chance words which, enclosed in a bottle, are committed to the waves, to tell at some distant date, and in some far-away land, the tale of impending ruin.

It is in vain I try to collect my thoughts: feelings too acute to be controlled, burst in upon me at each moment, and my sobs convulse me as I write. These lines must therefore bear the impress of the emotions that dictate them, and be broken—abrupt—mayhap incoherent!

He is false, Kitty!—false to the heart that he had won, and the affections where he sat enthroned! Yes, by the blackest treason has he requited my loyalty and rewarded my devotion. If ever there was a pure and holy love, it was mine. It was not the offspring of self-interest, for I knew that he was married; nor was I buoyed up by dreams of ambition, for I always knew

the great difficulty of obtaining a divorce. But I loved him, as the classic maiden wept—because it was inconsolable! It is not in my heart to deny the qualities of his gifted nature. No, Kitty, not even now can I depreciate them. How accomplished as a linguist!—how beautifully he drove!—how exquisitely he danced!—what perfection was his dress!—how fascinating his manners! There was—so to say—an idiosyncrasy—an idealism about him; his watch-guard was unlike any other—the very perfume of his pocket-handkerchief was the invention of his own genius.

And then, the soft flattery of his attentions before the world, bestowed with a delicacy that only high breeding ever understands. What wonder if my imagination followed where my heart had gone before, and if the visions of a future blended with the ecstasies of the present!

I cannot bring myself to speak of his treachery. No, Kitty, it would be to arraign myself were I to do so. My heartstrings are breaking as I ask myself, "Is this, then, the love that I inspired? Are these the proofs of a devotion I fondly fancied eternal?" No more can I speak of our last meeting, the agony of which must endure while life remains. When he left me, I almost dreaded that in his despair he might be driven to suicide. He fled from the house—it was past midnight—and never appeared the whole of the following day; another and another passed over—my terrors increased, my fears rose to madness. I could restrain myself no longer, and hurried away to confide my agonising sorrows to James's ear. It was early, and he was still sleeping. As I stole across the silent room I saw an open note upon the table—I knew the hand and seized it at once. There were but four lines, and they ran thus:

"Dear Jim,—The birds are wild and not very plenty; but there is some capital boar-shooting, and hares in abundance.

"They tell me Lady George is in Florence; pray see her, and let me know how she's looking.

"Ever yours,

"George Tiverton.

"Maremma."

I tottered to a seat, Kitty, and burst into tears. Yours are now falling for me—I feel it—I know it, dearest. I can write no more.

I am better now, dearest Kitty. My heart is stilled, its agonies are calmed, but my blanched cheek, my sunken eye, my bloodless lip, my trembling hand, all speak my sorrows, though my tongue shall utter them no more. Never again shall that name escape me, and I charge your friendship never to whisper it to my ears.

From myself and my own fortunes I turn away as from a theme barren

and profitless. Of Mary Anne—the lost, the forlorn, and the broken-hearted, you shall hear no more.

On Friday last—was it Friday?—I really forget days and dates and everything—James, who has latterly become totally changed in temper and appearance, contrived to fix a quarrel of some kind or other on Sir Morris Penrhyn. The circumstance was so far the more unfortunate, since Sir M. had shown himself most kind and energetic about Mamma's release, and mainly, I believe, contributed to that result. In the dark obscurity that involves the whole affair, we have failed to discover with whom the offence originated, or what it really was. We only know that James wrote a most indiscreet and intemperate note to Sir Morris, and then hastened away to appoint a friend to receive his message. By the merest accident he detected, in a passing travelling-carriage, a well-known face, followed it, and discovered—whom, think you?—but our former friend and neighbour, Doctor Belton.

He was on his way to England with despatches from Constantinople; but fortunately for James, received a telegraphic message to wait at Florence for more recent news from Vienna before proceeding further. James at once induced him to act for him; and firmly persuaded that a meeting must ensue, set out himself for the Modenese frontier beyond Lucca.

I have already said that we know nothing of the grounds of quarrel; we probably never shall; but whatever they were, the tact and delicacy of Doctor B., aided by the unvarying good sense and good temper of Sir Morris, succeeded in overcoming them; and this morning both these gentlemen drove here in a carriage, and had a long interview with Papa. The room in which he received them adjoined my own, and though for a long time the conversation was maintained in the dull, monotonous tone of ordinary speakers, at last I heard hearty laughter, in which Papa's voice was eminently conspicuous.

With a heart relieved of a heavy load, I dressed, and went into the drawing-room. I wore a very becoming dark blue silk, with three deep flounces, and as many falls of Valenciennes lace on my sleeves. My hair was "à l'Impératrice," and altogether, Kitty, I felt I was looking my very best; not the less, perhaps, that a certain degree of expectation had given me a faint colour, and imparted a heightened animation to my features. I was alone, too, and seated in a large, low arm-chair, one of those charming inventions of modern skill, whose excellence is to unite grace with comfort, and make ease itself subsidiary to elegance.

I could see in the glass at one side of me that my attitude was well chosen, and even to my instep upon the little stool the effect was good. Shall I own to you, Kitty, that I was bent on astonishing this poor native doctor with a change a year of foreign travel had wrought in me? I actually longed

to enjoy the amazed look with which he would survey me, and mark the deferential humility struggling with the remembrance of former intimacy. A hundred strange fancies shot through me—shall I fascinate him by mere externals, or shall I condescend to captivate? Shall I delight him by memories of home, and of long ago, or shall I shock him by the little levities of foreign manner? Shall I be brilliant, witty, and amusing, or shall I show myself gentle and subdued, or shall I dash my manner with a faint tinge of eccentricity, just enough to awaken interest by exciting anxiety?

I was almost ashamed to think of such an amount of preparation against so weak an adversary. It seemed ungenerous and even unfair, when suddenly I heard a carriage drive away from the door. I could have cried with vexation, but at the same instant heard Papa's voice on the stairs, saying: "If you'll step into the drawing-room, I'll join you presently," and Doctor Belton entered.

I expected, if not humility, dearest, at least deference, mingled with intense astonishment and perhaps admiration. Will you believe me when I tell you that he was just as composed, as easy, and unconstrained as if it was my sister Cary! The very utmost I could do was to restrain my angry sense of indignation; I'm not, indeed, quite certain that I succeeded in this, for I thought I detected at one moment a half-smile upon his features at a sally of more than ordinary smartness which I uttered.

I cannot express to you how much he is disimproved, not in appearance, for I own that he is remarkably good-looking, and, strange to say, has even the air and bearing of fashion about him. It is his manners, Kitty, his insufferable ease and self-sufficiency that I allude to. He talked away about the world and society, about great people and their habits, as if they were amongst his earliest associations. He was not astonished at anything; and stranger than all, showed not the slightest desire to base his present acquaintance upon our former intimacy.

I told him I detested Ireland, and hoped never to go back there. He coldly remarked, that with such feelings it were probably wiser to live abroad. I sneered at the vulgar tone of the untravelled English; and his impertinent remark was an allusion to the demerits of badly-imitated manners and ill-copied attractions. I grew enthusiastic about Art, praised pictures and statues, and got eloquent about Music. Fancy his cool insolence, in telling me that he was too uninformed to enter upon these themes, and only knew when he was pleased, but without being able to say why. In fact, Kitty, a more insufferable mass of conceit and presumption I never encountered, nor could I have believed that a few months of foreign travel could have converted a simple-hearted, unaffected young man, into a vain, self-opinionated coxcomb—too offensive to waste words on, and for whom I have really to apologise in thus obtruding on your notice.

It was an unspeakable relief to me when Papa joined us. A very little more would have exhausted my patience; and in my heart I believe the puppy saw as much, and enjoyed it as a triumph. Worse again, too, Papa complimented him upon the change a knowledge of the world had effected in him, and even asked me to concur in the commendation. I need not say that I replied to this address by a sneer not to be misunderstood, and I trust he felt it.

He is to dine here to-day. He declined the invitation at first, but suffered himself to be persuaded into a cold acceptance afterwards. He had to go to Lord Stanthorpe's in the evening. I expected to hear him say "Stanthorpe's;" but he didn't, and it vexed me. I have not been peculiarly courteous nor amiable to him this morning, but I hope he will find me even less so at dinner. I only wish that a certain person was here, and I would show, by the preference of my manner, how I can converse with, and how treat those whom I really recognise as my equals. I must now hurry away to prepare Cary for what she is to expect, and, if possible, instil into her mind some share of the prejudices which now torture my own.

Saturday Morning.

Everything considered, Kitty, our dinner of yesterday passed off pleasantly —a thousand times better than I expected. Sir Morris Penrhyn was of the party, too; and notwithstanding certain awkward passages that had once occurred between Mamma and him, comported himself agreeably and well. I conclude that Papa was able to make some explanations that must have satisfied him, for he appeared to renew his attentions to Cary; at least he bestowed upon her some arctic civilities, whose frigid deference chill me even in memory.

You will be curious to hear how Mr. B. (he appears to have dropped the Doctor) appeared on further intimacy; and really I am forced to confess that he rather overcame some of the unfavourable impressions his morning visit had left. He has evidently taken pains to profit by the opportunities afforded to him, and seen and learned whatever lay within his reach. He is a very respectable linguist, and not by any means so presumptuous as I at first supposed. I fancy, dearest, that somehow, unconsciously perhaps, we had been sparring with each other this morning, and that thus many of the opinions he appeared to profess were simply elicited by the spirit of contradiction. I say this, because I now find that we agree on a vast variety of topics, and even our judgments of people are not so much at variance as I could have imagined.

Of course, Kitty, the sphere of his knowledge of the world is a very limited one, and even what he *has* seen has always been in the capacity of a subordinate. He has not viewed life from the eminence of one who shall be

nameless, nor mixed in society with a rank that confers its prescriptive title to attention. I could wish he were more aware—more conscious of this fact. I mean, dearest, that I should like to see him more penetrated by his humble position, whereas his manner has an easy, calm unconstraint, that is exactly the opposite of what I imply. I cannot exactly, perhaps, convey the impression upon my own mind, but you may approximate to it, when I tell you that he vouchsafes neither surprise nor astonishment at the class of people with whom we now associate; nor does he appear to recognise in them anything more exalted than our old neighbours at Bruff.

Mamma gave him some rather sharp lessons on this score, which it is only fair to say that he bore with perfect good breeding. Upon the whole, he is really what would be called very agreeable, and unquestionably very good-looking. I sang for him two things out of Verdi's last opera of the "Trovatore;" but I soon discovered that music was one of the tastes he had not cultivated, nor did he evince any knowledge whatever when the conversation turned on dress. In fact, dearest, it is only your really fashionable man ever attains to a nice appreciation of this theme, or has a true sentiment for the poetry of costume.

Sir Morris and he seemed to have fallen into a sudden friendship, and found that they agreed precisely in their opinion about Etruscan vases, frescoes, and pre-Raphaelite art—subjects which I own general good breeding usually excludes from discussion where there are pretty girls to talk to. Cary, of course, was in ecstasies with all this; she thought—or fancied she thought—Morris most agreeable, whereas it was really the other man that "made all the running."

James arrived while we were at supper, and the first little awkwardness of the meeting over, became excellent friends with Morris. With all his cold, unattractive qualities, I am sure that Morris is a very amiable and worthy person; and if Cary likes him, I see no reason in life to refuse such an excellent offer—always provided that it be made. But of this, Kitty, I must be permitted to doubt, since he informed us that he was daily expecting his yacht out from England, and was about to sail on a voyage which might possibly occupy upwards of two years. He pressed Mr. B. strongly to accompany him, assuring him that he now possessed influence sufficient to reinstate him in his career at his return. I'm not quite certain that the proposal, when more formally renewed, will not be accepted.

I must tell you that I overheard Morris say, in a whisper to Belton, "I'm sure if you ask her, Lady Louisa will give you leave." Cannot be that the Doctor has dared to aspire to a Lady Louisa? I almost fancy it may be so, dearest, and that this presumption is the true explanation of all his cool self-sufficiency. I only want to be certain of this to hate him thoroughly.

Just before they took their leave a most awkward incident occurred. Mr.

B., in answer to some question from Morris, took out his tablets to look over his engagements for the next day: "Ah! by the way," said he, "that must not be forgotten. There is a certain scampish relative of Lord Darewood, for whom I have been entrusted with a somewhat disagreeable commission. This hopeful young gentleman has at last discovered that his wits, when exercised within legal limits, will not support him, and though he has contrived to palm himself off as a man of fashion on some second-rate folks who know no better, his skill at écarté and lansquenet fails to meet his requirements. He has accordingly taken a higher flight, and actually committed a forgery. The Earl whose name was counterfeited has paid the bill, but charged me with the task of acquainting his nephew with his knowledge of the fraud, and as frankly assuring him that, if the offence be repeated, he shall pay its penalty. I assure you I wish the duty had devolved upon any other, though, from all I have heard, anything like feelings of respect or compassion would be utterly thrown away if bestowed on such an object as Lord George Tiverton."

Oh, Kitty, the last words were not needed to make the cup of my anguish run over. At every syllable he uttered, the conviction of what was coming grew stronger; and though I maintained consciousness to the end, it was by a struggle that almost convulsed me.

As for Mamma, she flew out in a violent passion, called Lord Darewood some very hard names, and did not spare his emissary; fortunately her feelings so far overcame her, that she became totally unintelligible, and was carried away to her room in hysterics. As I was obliged to follow her, I was unable to hear more. But to what end should I desire it? Is not this last disappointment more than enough to discourage all hope and trustfulness for ever? Shall my heart ever open again to a sense of confidence in any?

When I sat down to write, I had firmly resolved not to reveal this disgraceful event to you; but somehow, Kitty, in the overflowing of a heart that has no recesses against you, it has come forth, and I leave it so.

James came to my room later on, and told me such dreadful stories—he had heard them from Morris—of Lord G., that I really felt my brain turning as I listened to him; that the separation from his wife was all a pretence—part of a plot arranged between them; that she, under the semblance of desertion, attracted to her the compassion—in some cases the affection—of young men of fortune, from whom her husband exacted the most enormous sums; that James himself had been marked out for a victim in this way; in fact, Kitty, I cannot go on;—a web of such infamy was exposed as I firmly believed till then impossible to exist, and a degree of baseness laid bare, that, for the sake of human nature, I trust has not its parallel.

I can write no more. Tears of shame as well as sorrow are blotting my paper, and in my self-abasement I feel how changed I must have become,

when, in reflecting over such disgrace as this, I have a single thought but of contempt for one so lost and dishonoured.

Yours in the depth of affliction,

MARY ANNE DODD.

## LETTER XXXIX.

KENNY JAMES DODD TO THOMAS PURCELL, ESQ., OF THE GRANGE, BRUFF.

Florence.

MY DEAR TOM,—I have had a busy week of it, and even now I scarcely perceive that the day is come when I can rest and repose myself. The pleasure-life of this same capital is a very exhausting process, and to do the thing well, a man's constitution ought to be in as healthy a condition as his cash account! Now, Tom, it is an unhappy fact, that I am a very "low letter" in both person and pocket, and I should be sorely puzzled to say whether I find it harder to dance or to pay for the music!

Don't fancy that I'm grumbling, now; not a bit of it, old fellow; I have had my day, and as pleasant a one as most men. And if a man starts in life with a strong fund of genial liking for his fellows, enjoying society less for its display than for its own resources in developing the bright side of human nature, take my word for it, he'll carry on with him, as he goes, memories and recollections enough to make his road agreeable, and, what is far better, to render himself companionable to others.

You tell me you want to hear "all about Florence"—a modest request, truly! Why, man, I might fill a volume with my own short experiences, and afterwards find that the whole could be condensed into a foot-note for the bottom of a page. In the first place, there are at least half a dozen distinct aspects in this place, which are almost as many cities. There is the Florence of Art—of pictures, statues, churches, frescoes, a town of unbounded treasures in objects of high interest. There are galleries, where a whole life might be passed in cultivating the eye, refining the taste, and elevating the imagination. There is the Florence of Historical Association, with its palaces recalling the feudal age, and its castellated strongholds, telling of the stormy times before the "Medici." There is not a street, there is scarcely a house, whose name does not awaken some stirring event, and bring you back to the period when men were as great in crime as in

genius. Here, an inscription tells you Benvenuto Cellini lived and laboured; yonder was the window of his studio; there, the narrow street through which he walked at nightfall, his hand upon his rapier, and his left arm well enveloped in his mantle. There, the stone where Dante used to sit; there, the villa Boccaccio inhabited; there, the lone tower where Galileo watched; there, the house, unchanged in everything, of the greatest of them all, Michael Angelo himself. The pen sketches of his glorious conceptions adorn the walls, the half-finished models of his immortal works are on the brackets. That splendid palace on the sunny Arno was Alfieri's. Go where you will, in fact, a gorgeous story of the past reveals itself before you, and you stand before the great triumphs of human genius, with the spirit of the authors around and about you.

There is also Florence the Beautiful and the Picturesque; Florence the City of Fashion and Splendour; and, saddest of all, Florence garrisoned by the stranger, and held in subjection by the Austrian!

I entertain no bigoted animosity to the German, Tom; on the contrary, I like him. I like his moral simplicity of character, his thorough good faith, his unswerving loyalty; but I own to you, his figure is out of keeping with the picture, here—the very tones of his harsh gutturals grate painfully on the ears, attuned to softer sounds. It is pretty nearly a hopeless quarrel when a Sovereign has recourse to a foreign intervention between himself and his subjects; as in private life, there is no reconciliation when you have once called Doctors' Commons to your counsels. You may get damages; you'll never have tranquillity. You'll say, perhaps, the thing was inevitable, and couldn't be helped. Nothing of the kind. Coercing the Tuscans by Austrian bayonets was like herding a flock of sheep with bull-dogs. I never saw a people who so little require the use of strong measures; the difficulty of ruling them lies not in their spirit of resistance, but in its very opposite—a plastic facility of temper that gives way to every pressure. Just like a horse with an over-fine mouth, you never can have him in hand, and never know that he has stumbled till he is down.

It was the duty of our Government to have prevented this occupation, or at least to have set some limits to its amount and duration. We did neither, and our influence has grievously suffered in consequence. Probably at no recent period of history was the name of England so little respected in the entire peninsula as at present. And now, if I don't take care, I'll really involve myself in a grumbling reverie, so here goes to leave the subject at once.

These Italians, Tom, are very like the Irish. There is the same blending of mirth and melancholy in the national temperament, the same imaginative cast of thought, the same hopefulness, and the same indolence. In justice to our own people, I must say that they are the better of the two. Paddy has

strong attachments, and is unquestionably courageous; neither of these qualities are conspicuous here. It would be ungenerous and unjust to pronounce upon the "naturel" of a people who for centuries have been subjected to every species of misrule, whose moral training has been also either neglected or corrupted, and whose only lessons have been those of craft and deception. It would be worse than rash to assume that a people so treated were unfitted for a freedom they never enjoyed, or unsuited to a liberty they never even heard of. Still, I may be permitted to doubt that Constitutional Government will ever find its home in the hearts of a Southern nation. The family, Tom—the fireside, the domestic habits of a Northern people, are the normal schools for self-government. It is in the reciprocities of a household men learn to apportion their share of the burdens of life, and to work for the common weal. The fellow who with a handful of chesnuts can provision himself for a whole day, and who can pass the night under the shade of a fig-tree, acknowledges no such responsibilities. All-sufficing to himself, he recognises no claims upon him for exertion in behalf of others; and as to the duties of citizenship, he would repudiate them as an intolerable burden. Take my word for it, Parliamentary Institutions will only flourish where you have coal-fires and carpets, and Elective Governments have a close affinity to easy-chairs and hearth-rugs!

You are curious to learn "how far familiarity with works of high art may have contributed to influence the national character of Italy?" I don't like to dogmatise on such a subject, but so far as my own narrow experience goes, I am far from attributing any high degree of culture to this source. I even doubt whether objects of beauty suggest a high degree of enjoyment, except to intellects already cultivated. I suspect that your men of Glasgow or Manchester, who never saw anything more artistic than a power-loom and a spinning-jenny, would stand favourable comparison with him who daily passes beside the "Dying Gladiator" or the Farnese Hercules.

Of course I do not extend this opinion to the educated classes, amongst whom there is a very high range of acquirement and cultivation. They bring, moreover, to the knowledge of any subject a peculiar subtlety of perception, a certain Machiavellian ingenuity, such as I have never noticed elsewhere. A great deal of the national distrustfulness and suspicion has its root in this very habit, and makes me often resigned to Northern dulness for the sake of Northern reliance and good faith.

They are most agreeable in all the intercourse of society. Less full of small attentions than the French, less ceremonious than the Germans, they are easier in manner than either. They are natural to the very verge of indifference; but above all their qualities stands pre-eminent their good-nature.

An ungenerous remark, a harsh allusion, an unkind anecdote, are utterly unknown amongst them, and all that witty smartness which makes the suc-

cess of a French salon would find no responsive echo in an Italian drawing-room. In a word, Tom, they are eminently a people to live amongst. They do not contribute much, but they exact as little; and if never broken-hearted when you separate, they are delighted when you meet; falling in naturally with your humour, tolerant of anything and everything, except what gives trouble.

There now, my dear Tom, are all my Italian experiences in a few words. I feel that by a discreet use of my material I might have made a tureen with what I have only filled a teaspoon, but as I am not writing for the public, but only for Tom Purcell, I'll not grumble at my wastefulness.

Of the society, what can I say that would not as well apply to any city of the same size as much resorted to by strangers? The world of fashion is pretty much the same thing everywhere; and though we may "change the venue," we are always pleading the same cause. They tell me that social liberty here is understood in a very liberal sense, and the right of private judgment on questions of morality exercised with a more than Protestant independence. I hear of things being done that could not be done elsewhere, and so on; but were I only to employ my own unassisted faculties, I should say that everything follows its ordinary routine, and that profligacy does not put on in Florence a single "travesty" that I have not seen at Brussels and Baden, and twenty similar places! True, people know each other very well, and discuss each other in all the privileged candour close friendship permits. This sincerity, abused as any good thing is liable to be, now and then grows scandalous; but still, Tom, though they may bespatter you with mud, nobody ever thinks you too dirty for society. In point of fact, there is a great deal of evil speaking, and very little malevolence; abundance of slander, but scarcely any ill-will. Mark you, these are what they tell me; for up to this moment I have not seen or heard anything but what has pleased me: met much courtesy, and some actual cordiality. And surely, if a man can chance upon a city where the climate is good, the markets well supplied, the women pretty, and the bankers tractable, he must needs be an ill-conditioned fellow not to rest satisfied with his good fortune. I don't mean to say I'd like to pass my life here, no more than I would like to wear a domino, and spend the rest of my days in a masquerade, for the whole thing is just as unreal, just as unnatural; but it is wonderfully amusing for a while, and I enjoy it greatly.

From what I have seen of the world of pleasure, I begin to suspect that we English people are never likely to have any great success in our attempts at it; and for this simple reason, that we bring to our social hours exhausted bodies and fatigued minds; we labour hard all day in law courts, or counting-houses, or committee-rooms, and when evening comes are overcome by our exertions, and very little disposed for those efforts which make conversation

brilliant, or intercourse amusing. Your foreigner, however, is a chartered libertine. He feels that Nature never meant him for anything but idleness; he takes to frivolity naturally and easily; and, what is of no small importance too, without any loss of self-esteem! Ah, Tom! that is the great secret of it all. We never do our fooling gracefully There is everlastingly rising up within us a certain bitter conviction that we are not doing fairly by ourselves, and that our faculties might be put to better and more noble uses than we have engaged them in. We walk the stage of life like an actor ashamed of his costume, and "our motley" never sets easily on us to the last. I think I had better stop dogmatising, Tom. Heaven knows where it may lead me, if I don't. Old Woodcock says that "he might have been a vagabond, if Providence hadn't made him a Justice of the Peace;" so I feel that it is not impossible I might have been a Moral Philosopher, if Fate hadn't made me the husband of Mrs. Dodd!

Wednesday Afternoon.

My dear Tom,—I had thought to have despatched this prosy epistle without being obliged to inflict you with any personal details of the Dodd family. I was even vaunting to myself that I had kept us all "out of the indictment," and now I discover that I have made a signal failure, and the codicil must revoke the whole body of the testament. How shall I ever get my head clear enough to relate all I want to tell you? I go looking after a stray idea the way I'd chase a fellow in a crowded fair or market, catching a glimpse of him, now—losing him, again—here, with my hand almost on him—and the next minute no sign of him! Try and follow me, however; don't quit me for a moment; and, above all, Tom, whatever vagaries I may fall into, be still assured that I have a road to go, if I only have the wit to discover it!

First of all about Morris, or Sir Morris, as I ought to call him. I told you in my last how warmly he had taken up Mrs. D.'s cause, and how mainly instrumental was he in her liberation. This being accomplished, however, I could not but perceive that he inclined to resume the cold and distant tone he had of late assumed towards us, and rather retire from, than incur, any renewal of our intimacy. When I was younger in the world, Tom, I believe I'd have let him follow his humour undisturbed; but with more mature experience of life, I have come to see that one often sacrifices a real friendship in the indulgence of some petty regard to a ceremonial usage, and so I resolved, at least, to know the why, if I could, of Morris's conduct.

I went frankly to him at his hotel, and asked for an explanation. He stared at me for a second or two without speaking, and then said something about the shortness of my memory—a recent circumstance—and suchlike, that I could make nothing of. Seeing my embarrassment, he appeared

slightly irritated, and proceeded to unlock a writing-desk on the table before him, saying hurriedly:

"I shall be able to refresh your recollection, and when you read over——" He stopped, clasped his hand to his forehead suddenly, and, as if overcome, threw himself down into a seat, deeply agitated. "Forgive me," said he at length, "if I ask you a question or two. You remember being ill at Genoa, don't you?"

"Perfectly."

"You can also remember receiving a letter from me at that time?"

"No—nothing of the kind!"

"No letter?—you received no letter of mine?"

"None!"

"Oh, then, this must really——" He paused, and overcoming what I saw was a violent burst of indignation, he walked the room up and down for several minutes. "Mr. Dodd," said he to me, taking my hand in both his own, "I have to entreat your forgiveness for a most mistaken impression on my part influencing me in my relations, and suggesting a degree of coldness and distrust which, owing to your manliness of character alone, has not ended in our estrangement for ever. I believed you had been in possession of a letter from me; I thought until this moment that it really had reached you. I now know that I was mistaken, and have only to express my sincere contrition for having acted under a rash credulity." He went over this again and again, always, as it seemed to me, as if about to say more, and then suddenly checking himself under what appeared to be a quickly remembered reason for reserve

I was getting impatient at last. I thought that the explanation explained little, and was really about to say so, but he anticipated me by saying "Believe me, my dear Sir, any suffering, any unhappiness that my error has occasioned, has fallen entirely upon me. *You*, at least, have nothing to complain of. The letter which ought to have reached you contained a proposal from me for the hand of your younger daughter; a proposal which I now make to you, happily, in a way that cannot be frustrated by an accident." He went on to press his suit, Tom, eagerly and warmly; but still with that scrupulous regard to truthfulness I have ever remarked in him. He acknowledged the difference in age, the difference in character, the disparity between Cary's joyous, sunny nature and his own colder mood; but he hoped for happiness, on grounds so solid and so reasonable, that showed me much of his own thoughtful habit of mind.

Of his fortune, he simply said that it was very far above all his requirements; that he himself had few, if any, expensive tastes, but was amply able to indulge such in a wife, if she were disposed to cultivate them. He added, that he knew my daughter had always been accustomed to habits of luxury

and expense, always lived in a style that included every possible gratification, and therefore, if not in possession of ample means, he never would have presumed on his present offer.

I felt for a moment the vulgar pleasure that such flattery confers. I own to you, Tom, I experienced a degree of satisfaction at thinking that even to the observant eyes of Morris himself—old soldier as he was—the Dodds had passed for brilliant and fashionable folk, in the fullest enjoyment of every gift of fortune; but as quickly a more honest and more manly impulse overcame this thought, and in a few words I told him that he was totally mistaken; that I was a poor, half-ruined Irish gentleman, with an indolent tenantry and an encumbered estate; that our means afforded no possible pretension to the style in which we lived, nor the society we mixed in; that it would require years of patient economy and privation to repay the extravagance into which our foreign tour had launched us; and that, so convinced was I of the inevitable ruin a continuance of such a life must incur, I had firmly resolved to go back to Ireland at the end of the present month, and never leave it again for the rest of my days.

I suppose I spoke warmly, for I felt deeply. The shame many of the avowals might have cost me in calmer mood was forgotten, now, in my ardent determination to be honest and above-board. I was resolved, too, to make amends to my own heart for all the petty deceptions I had descended to in a former case, and, even at the cost of the loss of a son-in-law, to secure a little sense of self-esteem.

He would not let me finish, Tom, but, grasping my hand in his with a grip I didn't believe he was capable of, he said:

"Dodd," he forgot the Mr. this time—"Dodd, you are an honest, true-hearted fellow, and I always thought so. Consent now to my entreaty—at least do not refuse it—and I'd not exchange my condition with that of any man in Europe!"

Egad, I could not have recognised him as he spoke, for his cheek coloured up, and his eye flashed, and there was a dash of energy about him I had never detected in his nature. It was just the quality I feared he was deficient in. Ay, Tom, I can't deny it, old Celt that I am, I wouldn't give a brass farthing for a fellow whose temperament cannot be warmed up to some burst of momentary enthusiasm!

Of my hearty consent and my good wishes I speedily assured him, just adding, "Cary must say the rest." I told him frankly that I saw it was a great match for my daughter; that both in rank and fortune he was considerably above what she might have looked for; but with all that, if she herself wouldn't have taken him in his days of humbler destiny, my advice would be, "don't have him now."

He left me for a moment to say something to his mother—I suppose some

explanation about this same letter that went astray, and of which I can make nothing—and then they came back together. The old lady seemed as well pleased as her son, and told me that his choice was her own in every respect. She spoke of Cary with the most hearty affection; but with all her praise of her, she doesn't know half her real worth; but even what she did say brought the tears to my eyes, and—I'm afraid—I made a fool of myself!

You may be sure, Tom, that it was a happy day with me, although, for a variety of reasons, I was obliged to keep my secret for my own heart. Morris proposed that he should be permitted to wait on us the next morning, to pay his respects to Mrs. D. upon her liberation, and thus his visit might be made the means of reopening our acquaintance. You'd think that to these arrangements, so simple and natural, one might look forward with an easy tranquillity. So did I, Tom—and so was I mistaken. Mr. James, whose conduct latterly seems to have pendulated between monastic severity and the very wildest dissipation, takes it into his wise head that Morris has insulted him. He thinks—no, not thinks, but dreams—that this calm-tempered, quiet gentleman is pursuing an organised system of outrage towards him, and has for a time back made him the mark of his sarcastic pleasantry. Full of this sage conceit, he hurries off to his hotel, to offer him a personal insult. They fortunately do not meet; but James, ordering pen and paper, sits down and indites a letter. I have not seen it: but even his friend considers it to have been "a step ill-advised and inconsiderate—in fact, to be deeply regretted."

I cannot conjecture what might have been Morris's conduct under other circumstances, but in his present relations to myself, he saw, probably, but one course open to him. He condescended to overlook the terms of this insulting note, and calmly ask for an explanation of it. By great good luck, James had placed the affair in young Belton's hands—our former doctor at Bruff—who chanced to be on his way through here; and thus, by the good sense of one, and the calm temper of the other, this rash boy has been rescued from one of the most causeless quarrels ever heard of. James had started for Modena, I believe, with a carpet-bag full of cigars, a French novel, and a bullet-mould; but before he had arrived at his destination, Morris, Belton, and myself were laughing heartily over the whole adventure. Morris's conduct throughout the entire business raised him still higher in my esteem; and the consummate good tact with which he avoided the slightest reflection that might pain me on my son's score, showed me that he was a thorough gentleman. I must say, too, that Belton behaved admirably. Brief as has been his residence abroad, he has acquired the habits of a perfect man of the world, but without sacrificing a jot of his truly frank and generous temperament.

Ah, Tom! it was not without some sharp self-reproaches that I saw this

young fellow, poor and friendless as he started in life, struggling with that hard fate that insists upon a man's feeling independent in spirit and humble in manner, fighting that bitter battle contained in a dispensary doctor's life, emerge at once into an accomplished, well-informed gentleman, well versed in all the popular topics of the day, and evidently stored with a deeper and more valuable kind of knowledge—I say, I saw all this, and thought of my own boy, bred up with what were unquestionably greater advantages and better opportunities of learning, not obliged to adventure on a career in his mere student years, but with ample time and leisure for cultivation; and yet, there he was—there he is, this minute—and there is not a station nor condition in life wherein he could earn half-a-crown a day. He was educated, as it is facetiously called, at Dr. Stingem's school. He read his Homer and Virgil, wrote his false quantities, and blundered through his Greek themes, like the rest. He went through—it's a good phrase—some books of Euclid, and covered reams of foolscap with equations; and yet, to this hour, he can't translate a classic, nor do a sum in common arithmetic, while his handwriting is a cuneiform character that defies a key: and with all that, the boy is not a fool, nor deficient in teachable qualities. I hope and trust this system is coming to an end. I wish sincerely, Tom, that we may have seen the last of a teaching that for one whom it made accomplished and well informed, converted fifty into pedants, and left a hundred dunces! Intelligible spelling, and readable writing, a little history, and the "Rule of Three," some geography, a short course of chemistry and practical mathematics—that's not too much, I think—and yet I'd be easy in my mind if James had gone that far, even though he were ignorant of "spondees," and had never read a line of that classic morality they call the Heathen Mythology. I'd not have touched upon this ungrateful theme, but that my thoughts have been running on the advantages we were to have derived from our foreign tour, and some misgivings striking me as to their being realised.

Perhaps we are not very docile subjects—perhaps we set about the thing in a wrong way—perhaps we had not stored our minds with the preliminary knowledge necessary—perhaps——anything you like, in short; but here we are, in all essentials, as ignorant of everything a residence abroad might be supposed to teach, as though we had never quitted Dodsborough. Stop—I'm going too fast—we *have* learned some things not usually acquired at home; we have attained to an extravagant passion for dress, and an inordinate love of grand acquaintances. Mary Anne is an advanced student in modern French romance literature; James, no mean proficient at écarté; Mrs. D. has added largely to the stock of what she calls her "knowledge of life," by familiar intimacy with a score of people who ought to be at the galleys; and I, with every endeavour to oppose the tendency, have grown as

suspicious as a government spy, and as meanly inquisitive about other people's affairs as though I were Prime Minister to an Italian Prince.

We have lost that wholesome reserve with respect to mere acquaintances, and by which our manner to our friends attained to its distinctive signs of cordiality, for now we are on the same terms with all the world. The code is, to be charmed with everything and everybody—with their looks—with their manners—with their house and their liveries—with their table and their "toilette"—ay, even with their vices! There is the great lesson, Tom; you grow lenient to everything save the reprobation of wrong, and *that* you set down for rank hypocrisy, and cry out against as the blackest of all the blemishes of humanity.

Nor is it a small evil that our attachment to home is weakened, and even a sense of shame engendered with respect to a hundred little habits and customs that to foreign eyes appear absurd—and perhaps vulgar. And lastly comes the great question, How are we ever to live in our own country again, with all these exotic notions and opinions? I don't mean how are *we* to bear *Ireland*, but how is *Ireland* to endure *us?* An American shrewdly remarked to me t'other day, "that one of the greatest difficulties of the slave question was, how to emancipate the slave *owners!* how to liberate the shackles of their rusty old prejudices, and fit them to stand side by side with real freemen!" And in a vast variety of questions you'll often discover that the puzzle is on the side opposite to that we had been looking at. In this way do I feel that all my old friends will have much to overlook—much to forgive in my present moods of thinking. I'll no more be able to take interest in home politics again, than I could live on potatoes! My sympathies are now more catholic. I can feel acutely for Schleswig-Holstein, or the Druses at Lebanon. I am deeply interested about the Danubian Provinces, and strong on Sebastopol; but I regard as contemptible the cares of a Quarter Sessions, or the business of the "Union." If you want me to listen, you must talk of the Cossacks, or the war in the Caucasus; and I am far less anxious about who may be the new member for Bruff, than who will be the next "Vladica" of "Montenegro."

These ruminations of mine might never come to a conclusion, Tom, if it were not that I have just received a short note from Belton, with a pressing entreaty that he may see me at once on a matter of importance to myself, and I have ordered a coach to take me over to his hotel. If I can get back in time for post hour I'll be able to explain the reason of this sudden call, till when, I say, adieu.

## LETTER XL.

MISS CAROLINE DODD TO MISS COX, AT MISS MINCING'S ACADEMY, BLACK ROCK, IRELAND.

Florence.

My dearest Miss Cox,—It would be worse than ingratitude in me were I to defer telling you how happy I am, and with what a perfect shower of favours Fortune has just overwhelmed me! Little thought I, a few weeks back, that Florence was to become to me the spot nearest and dearest to my heart, associated as it is, and ever must be, with the most blissful event of my life! Sir Penrhyn Morris, who, from some unexplained misconception, had all but ceased to know us, was accidentally thrown in our way by the circumstance of Mamma's imprisonment. By his kind and zealous aid her liberation was at length accomplished, and, as a matter of course, he called to make his inquiries after her, and receive our grateful acknowledgments.

I scarcely can tell—my head is too confused to remember—the steps by which he retraced his former place in our intimacy. It is possible there may have been explanations on both sides. I only know that he took his leave one morning with the very coldest of salutations, and appeared on the next day with a manner of the deepest devotion, so evidently directed towards myself, that it would have been downright affectation to appear indifferent to it.

He asked me in a low and faltering voice if I would accord him a few moments' interview. He spoke the words with a degree of effort at calmness that gave them a most significant meaning, and I suddenly remembered a certain passage in one of your letters to me, wherein you speak of the inconsiderate conduct which girls occasionally pursue in accepting the attentions of men, whose difference in age would seem to exclude them from the category of suitors. So far from having incurred this error, I had actually retreated from any advances on his part, not from the disparity of our ages, but from the far wider gulfs that separated *his* highly cultivated and informed mind from *my* ungifted and unstored intellect. Partly in shame at my inferiority, partly with a conscious sense of what his impression of me must be, I avoided, so far as I could, his intimacy; and even when domesticated with him, I sought for occupations in which he could not join, and estranged myself from the pursuits which he loved to practise.

Oh! my dear, kind governess, how thoroughly I recognise the truthfulness of all your views of life; how sincerely I own that I have never followed them without advantage—never neglected them without loss. How often have you told me that "dissimulation is never good;" that, however speciously we may persuade ourselves that in feigning a part we are screening our self-esteem from insult, or saving the feelings of others, the policy is ever a bad one; and that, "if our sincerity be only allied with an honest humility, it never errs." The pains I took to escape from the dangerous proximity of his presence, suggested to him that I disliked his attentions, and desired to avoid them; and acting on this conviction it was that he made a journey to England during the time I was a visitor at his mother's. It would appear, however, that his esteem for me had taken a deeper root than he perhaps suspected, for on his return his attentions were redoubled, and I could detect that in a variety of ways his feelings towards me were not those of mere friendship. Of mine towards him I will conceal nothing from you. They were deep and intense admiration for qualities of the highest order, and as much of love as consisted with a kind of fear—a sense of almost terror lest he should resent the presumption of such affection as mine.

You already know something of our habits of life abroad—wasteful and extravagant beyond all the pretentions of our fortune. It was a difficult thing for me to carry on the semblance of our assumed position so as not to throw discredit upon my family, and, at the same time, avoid the disingenuousness of such a part. The struggle, from which I saw no escape, was too much for me, and I determined to leave the Morrises and return home—to leave a house wherein I already had acquired the first steps of the right road in life, and go back to dissipations in which I felt no pleasure, and gaieties that never enlivened! I did not tell you all this at the time, my dear friend, partly because I had not the courage for it, and partly that the avowal might seem to throw a reproach on those whom my affection should shield from even a criticism. If I speak of it now, it is because, happily, the theme is one hourly discussed amongst us in all the candour of true frankness. We have no longer concealments, and we are happy.

It may have been that the abruptness of my departure offended Captain Morris, or possibly some other cause produced the estrangement; but, assuredly, he no longer cultivated the intimacy he had once seemed so ardently to desire, and, until the event of Mamma's misfortune here, he ceased to visit us.

And now came the interview I have alluded to! Oh, my dearest friend, if there be a moment in life which combines within it the most exquisite delight with the most torturing agony, it is that in which an affection is sought for by one who, immeasurably above us in all the gifts of fortune, still seems to feel that there is a presumption in his demand, and that his

appeal may be rejected. I know not how to speak of that conflict between pride and shame, between the ecstasy of conquest and the innate sense of the unworthiness that had won the victory!

Sir Penrhyn thought, or fancied he thought, me fond of display and splendour—that in conforming to the quiet habits of his mother's house, I was only submitting with a good grace to privations. I undeceived him at once. I confessed, not without some shame, that I was in a manner unsuited to the details of an exalted station—that wealth and its accompaniments would in reality be rather burdens than pleasure to one whose tastes were humble as my own—that, in fact, I was so little of a "Grande Dame," that I should inevitably break down in the part, and that no appliances of mere riches could repay for the onerous duties of dispensing them.

"In so much," interrupted he, with a half-smile, "that you would prefer a poor man to a rich one?"

"If you mean," said I, "a poor man who felt no shame in his poverty, in comparison with a rich man who felt his pride in his wealth, I say, Yes."

"Then what say you to one who has passed through both ordeals," said he, "and only asks that you should share either with him to make him happy?"

I have no need to tell you my answer. It satisfied *him*, and made mine the happiest heart in the world. And now we are to be married, dearest, in a fortnight or three weeks—as soon, in fact, as may be; and then we are to take a short tour to Rome and Naples, where Sir Penrhyn's yacht is to meet us; after which we visit Malta, coast along Spain, and home. Home sounds delightfully when it means all that one's fondest fancies can weave of country, of domestic happiness, of duties heartily entered on, and of affections well repaid.

Penrhyn is very splendid; the castle is of feudal antiquity, and the grounds are princely in extent and beauty. Sir Morris is justly proud of his ancestral possessions, and longs to show me its stately magnificence; but still more do I long for the moment when my dear Miss Cox will be my guest, and take up her quarters in a certain little room that opens on a terraced garden overlooking the sea. I fixed on the spot the very instant I saw a drawing of the castle, and I am certain you will not find it in your heart to refuse me what will thus make up the perfect measure of my happiness.

In all the selfishness of my joy, I have forgotten to tell you of Florence; but, in truth, it would require a calmer head than mine to talk of Galleries and works of Art, while my thoughts are running on the bright realities of my condition. It is true we go everywhere and see everything, but I am in such a humour to be pleased that I am delighted with all, and can be critical to nothing. I half suspect that Art, as Art, is a source of pleasure to a very few. I mean, that the number is a limited one which can enter into all the

minute excellences of a great work, appreciate justly the difficulties overcome, and value deservingly the real triumph accomplished. For myself, I know and feel that painting has its greatest charm for me in its power of suggestiveness, and, consequently, the subject is often of more consequence than the treatment of it; not that I am cold to the chaste loveliness of a Raphael, or indifferent to the gorgeous beauty of a Giordano. They appeal to me, however, in somewhat the same way, and my mind at once sets to work upon an ideal character of the creation before me. That this same admiration of mine is a very humble effort at appreciating artistic excellence, I want no better proof than the fact, that it is exactly what Betty Cobb herself felt on being shown the pictures in "the Pitti." Her honest worship of a Madonna at once invested her with every attribute of goodness, and the painter, could he only have heard the praises she uttered, might have revelled in the triumph of an art that can rise above the mere delineation of external beauty. That the appeal to her own heart was direct, was evidenced by her constant reference to some living resemblance to the picture before her. Now, it was a saintly hermit by Caracci—that was the image of Peter Delany at the cross-roads; now, it was a Judas—that was like Tom Noon of the turnpike; and now, it was a lovely head by Titian—the "very moral of Miss Kitty Doolan when her hair was down about her." I am certain, my dearest Miss Cox, that the delight conveyed by painting and music is a much more natural pleasure than that derived from the enjoyment of imaginary composition by writing. The appeal is not alone direct, but it is in a manner the same to all—to the highest king upon the throne, and to the lowly peasant, as in meek wonder he stands entranced and enraptured.

But why do I loiter within doors when it is of Florence itself, of its sunny Arno, of its cypress-crowned San Miniato, and of the villa-clad Fiezole I would tell you! But even these are so interwoven with the frame of mind in which I now enjoy them, that to speak of them would be again to revert to my selfishness.

Yesterday we made an excursion to Vallambrosa, which lies in a cleft between two lofty mountains, about thirteen miles from this. It was a strange transition from the warm air and sunny streets of Florence, with all their objects of artistic wonder on every side, to find oneself suddenly traversing a wild mountain gorge in a rude bullock-cart, guided by a peasant of semi-savage aspect, his sheepskin mantle and long ox-goad giving a picturesque air to his tall and sinewy figure. The snow lay heavily in all the crevices around, and it was a perfectly Alpine scene in its desolation; nor, I must say, did it recal a single one of the ideas with which our great poet has associated it. The thickly strewn leaves have no existence here, since the trees are not deciduous, and consist entirely of pines.

A straight avenue in the forest leads to the convent, which is of immense

size, forming a great quadrangle. At a little distance off, sheltered by a thick grove of tall pines, stands a small building appropriated to the accommodation of strangers, who are the guests of the monks for any period short of three days, and by a special permission for even a longer time.

We passed the day and the night there, and I would willingly have lingered still longer. From the mountain peak above the convent the two seas at either side of the peninsula are visible, and the Gulf of Genoa and the Adriatic are stretched out at your feet, with the vast plain of Central Italy, dotted over with cities, every name of which is a spell to memory! Thence back to Florence, and all that gay world that seemed so small to the eye the day before! And now, dearest Miss Cox, let me conclude, ere my own littleness become more apparent, for here I am, tossing over laces and embroidery, gazing with rapture at brooches and bracelets, and actually fancying how captivating I shall be when apparelled in all this finery. It would be mere deceitfulness in me were I to tell you that I am not charmed with the splendour that surrounds me. Let me only hope that it may not corrupt that heart which at no time was more entirely your own than while I write myself yours affectionately,

CAROLINE DODD.

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## LETTER XLI.

*KENNY JAMES DODD TO THOMAS PURCELL, ESQ., OF THE GRANGE, BRUFF.*

Florence.

WELL, my dear Tom, my task is at last completed—my magnum opus accomplished. I have carried all my measures, if not with triumphant majorities, at least with a "good working party," as the slang has it, and I stand proudly pre-eminent the head of the Dodd Administration. I have no patience for details. I like better to tell you the results in some striking paragraph, to be headed "Latest Intelligence," and to run thus: "Our last advices inform us that, notwithstanding the intrigues in the Cabinet, K. I. maintains his ascendancy. We have no official intelligence of the fact, but all the authorities concur in believing that the Dodds are about to leave the Continent and return to Ireland."

Ay, Tom, that is the grand and comprehensive measure of family reform I have so long laboured over, and at length have the proud gratification to see Law!

I find, on looking back, that I left off on my being sent for by Belton. I'll try and take up one of the threads of my tangled narrative at that point. I found him at his hotel in conversation with a very smartly dressed, well-whiskered, kid-gloved little man, whom he presented as "Mr. Curl Davis, of Lincoln's Inn." Mr. D. was giving a rather pleasant account of the casualties of his first trip to Italy when I entered, but immediately stopped, and seemed to think that the hour of business should usurp the time of mere amusement.

Belton soon informed me why, by telling me that Mr. C. D. was a London Collector who transacted the foreign affairs for various discounting houses at home, and who held a roving commission to worry, harass, and torment all such and sundry as might have drawn, signed, or endorsed bills, either for their own accommodation or that of their friends.

Now I had not the most remote notion how I should come to figure in this category. I knew well that you had "taken care of"—that's the word—all my little missives in that fashion. So persuaded was I of my sincerity, that I offered him at once a small wager that he had mistaken his man, and that it was, in fact, some other Dodd, bent on bringing our honourable name to shame and disgrace.

"It must, under these circumstances, then," said he, "be a very gross case of forgery, for the name is yours; nor can I discover any other with the same Christian names." So saying, he produced a pocket-book, like a family Bible, and drew from out a small partition of it a bill for five hundred pounds, at nine months, drawn and endorsed by me in favour of the Hon. Augustus Gore Hampton!

This precious document had now about fifty-two hours some odd minutes to run. In other words, it was a crocodile's egg with the shell already bursting, and the reptile's head prepared to spring out.

"The writing, if not yours, is an admirable imitation," said Davis, surveying it through his double eye-glass.

"Is it yours?" asked Belton.

"Yes," said I, with a great effort to behave like an ancient Roman.

"Ah, then, it is all correct," said Davis, smirking. "I am charmed to find that the case presents no difficulty whatsoever."

"I'm not quite so certain of that, Sir," said I; "I take a very different view of the transaction."

"Don't be alarmed, Mr. Dodd," said he, coaxingly, "we are not Shylocks. We will meet your convenience in any way; in fact, it is with that sole object I have come out from England. 'Don't negotiate it,' said Mr. Gore Hampton to me, 'if you can possibly help it; see Mr. D. himself, ask what arrangement will best suit him, take half of the amount in cash, and renew the bill at three

months, rather than push him to an inconvenience.' I assure you these were his own words, for there isn't a more generous fellow breathing than Gore." Mr. Davis uttered this with a kind of hearty expansiveness, as though to say, "The man's my friend, and let me see who'll gainsay me."

"Am I at liberty to inquire into the circumstances of this transaction?" said Belton, who had been for some minutes attentively examining the bill, and the several names upon it, and comparing the writing with some other that he held in his hand.

I half scrupled to say "Yes" to this request, Tom. If there be anything particularly painful in shame above all others, it is for an old fellow to come to confession of his follies to a young one. It reverses their relative stations to each other so fatally, that they never can stand rightly again. He saw this, or he seemed to see it, in a second, by my hesitation, for, quickly turning to Mr. Davis, he said, "Our meeting here is a most opportune one, as you will perceive by this paper"—giving him a letter as he spoke. Although I paid little attention to these words, I was soon struck by the change that had come over Mr. Davis. The fresh and rosy cheek was now blanched, the easy smile had departed, and a look of terror and dismay was exhibited in its place.

"Now, Sir," said Belton, folding up the document, "you see I have been very frank with you. The charges contained in that letter I am in a position to prove. The Earl of Darewood has placed all the papers in my hands, and given me full permission as to how I shall employ them. Mr. Dodd," said he, addressing me, "if I am not at liberty to ask you the history of that bill, there is at least nothing to prevent *my* informing *you* that all the names upon it are those of men banded together for purposes of fraud."

"Take care what you say, Sir," said Davis, affecting to write down his words, but in his confusion unable to form a letter.

"I shall accept your caution as it deserves," said Belton, "and say that they are a party of professional swindlers—men who cheat at play, intimidate for money, and even commit forgery for it."

Davis moved towards the door, but Belton anticipated him, and he sat down again without a word.

"Now, Mr. Davis," said he, calmly, "it is left entirely to my discretion in what way I am to proceed with respect to one of the parties to these frauds." As he got thus far, the waiter entered, and presented a visiting card, on which Belton said—"Yes, show him up-stairs," and the next minute Lord George Tiverton made his appearance. He was already in the middle of the room ere he perceived me, and for the first time in my life I saw signs of embarrassment and shame on his impassive features.

"They told me you were alone, Mr. Belton," said he, angrily, and as if about to retire.

"For all the purposes you have come upon, my Lord, it is the same as though I were."

"Is it blown, then?" asked his Lordship of Davis; and the other replied with an almost imperceptible nod. Muttering what sounded like a curse, Tiverton threw himself into a chair, drawing his hat, which he still wore, more deeply over his eyes.

I assure you, Tom, that so overwhelmed was I by this distressing scene, for, say what you will, there is nothing so distressing as to see the man with whom you have lived in intimacy, if not actual friendship, suddenly displayed, in all the glaring colours of scoundrelism. You feel yourself so humiliated before such a spectacle, that the sense of shame becomes like an atmosphere around you; I actually heard nothing—I saw nothing. A scene of angry discussion ensued between Belton and the lawyer—Tiverton never uttered a word—of which I caught not one syllable. I could only mark, at last, that Belton had gained the upper hand, and in the other's subdued manner and submissive tone defeat was plainly written.

"Will Mr. Dodd deny his liability?" cried out Davis; and though, I suppose, he must have said the words many times over, I could not bring myself to suppose they were addressed to me.

"I shall not ask him that question," said Belton, "but *you* may."

"Hang it, Curl! you know it was a 'plant,'" said Tiverton, who was now smoking a cigar as coolly as possible. "What's the use of pushing them further? We've lost the game, man!"

"Just so, my Lord," said Belton; "and notwithstanding all his pretended boldness, nobody is more aware of that fact than Mr. Curl Davis, and the sooner he adopts your Lordship's frankness the quicker will this affair be settled."

Belton and the lawyer conversed eagerly together in half-whispers. I could only overhear a stray word or two; but they were enough to show me that Davis was pressing for some kind of a compromise, to which the other would not accede, and the terms of which came down successively from five hundred pounds to three, two, one, and at last fifty.

"No, nor five, Sir—not five shillings in such a cause!" said Belton, determinedly. "I should feel it an indelible disgrace upon me for ever to concede one farthing to a scheme so base and contemptible. Take my word for it, to escape exposure in such a case is no slight immunity."

Davis still demurred, but it was rather with the disciplined resistance of a well-trained rascal than with the ardour of a strong conviction.

The altercation—for it was such—interested me wonderfully little, my attention being entirely bestowed on Tiverton, who had now lighted his third cigar, which he was smoking away vigorously, never once bestowing a look towards me, nor in any way seeming to recognise my presence. A sudden

pause in the discussion attracted me, and I saw that Mr. Davis was handing over several papers, which, to my practical eye, resembled bills, to Belton, who carefully perused each of them in turn before enclosing them in his pocket-book.

"Now, my Lord, I am at your service," said Belton; "but I presume our interview may as well be without witnesses."

"I should like to have Davis here," replied Tiverton, languidly; "seeing how you have bullied *him* only satisfies me how little chance *I* shall have with you."

Not waiting to hear an answer to this speech, I arose and took my hat, and pressing Belton's hand cordially, as I asked him to dinner for that day, I hurried out of the room. Not, however, without his having time to whisper to me:

"That affair is all arranged—have no further uneasiness on the subject."

I was in the street in the midst of the moving, bustling population, with all the life, din, and turmoil of a great city around me, and yet I stood confounded and overwhelmed by what I had just witnessed. "And this," said I, at last, "is the way the business of the world goes on—robbery, cheating, intimidation, and overreaching are the politenesses men reciprocate with each other!" Ah, Tom, with what scanty justice we regard our poor hard-working, half-starved, and ragged people, when men of rank, station, and refinement are such culprits as this! Nor could I help confessing that if I had passed my life at home, in my own country, such an instance as I had just seen had, in all likelihood, never occurred to me. The truth is, that there is a simplicity in the life of poor countries that almost excludes such a craft as that of a swindler. Society must be a complex and intricate machinery where *they* are to thrive. There must be all the thousand requirements that are begotten of a pampered and luxurious civilisation, and all the faults and frailties that grow out of these. Your well-bred scoundrel trades upon the follies, the weaknesses, the foibles, rather than the vices of the world, and his richest harvest lies amongst those who have ambitions above their station, and pretensions unsuited to their property—in one word, to the "Dodds of this world, whether they issue from Tipperary or Yorkshire, whether their tongue betray the Celt or the Saxon!"

I grew very moral on this theme as I walked along, and actually found myself at my own door before I knew where I was. I discovered that Morris and his mother had been visiting Mrs. D. in my absence, and that the interview had passed off satisfactorily Cary's bright and cheery looks sufficiently assured me. Perhaps she was "not i' the vein," or perhaps she was awed by the presence of real wealth and fortune but I was glad to find that Mrs. D. scarcely more than alluded to the splendours of Dodsborough; nor did she bring in the M'Carthys more than four times during their stay. This is

encouraging, Tom; and who knows but in time we may be able to "lay this family," and live without the terrors of their resurrection!

The Morrises are to dine with us, and I only trust that we shall not give them a "taste of our quality" in high living, for I have just caught sight of a fellow with a white cap going into Mrs. D.'s dressing-room, and the preparations are evidently considerable. Here's Mary Anne saying she has something of consequence to impart to me, and so, for the present, farewell.

The murder is out, Tom, and all the mystery of Morris's missing letter made clear. Mrs. D. received it during my illness at Genoa, and finding it to be a proposal of marriage to Cary, took it upon her to write an indignant refusal. Mary Anne has just confessed the whole to me in strict secrecy, frankly owning that she herself was the great culprit on the occasion, and that the terms of the reply were actually dictated by her. She said that her present avowal was made less in reparation for her misconduct—which she owned to be inexcusable—than as an obligation she felt under to requite the admirable behaviour of Morris, who, by this time, must have surmised what had occurred, and whose gentlemanlike feeling recoiled from vindicating himself at the cost of family disunion and exposure.

I tell you frankly, Tom, that Mary Anne's own candour, the honest, straightforward way in which she told me the whole incident, amply repays me for all the annoyance it occasioned. Her conduct now assures me that, notwithstanding all the corrupting influences of our life abroad, the girl's generous nature has still survived, and may yet, with good care, be trained up to high deservings. Of course she enjoined me to secrecy; but even had she not done so, I'd have respected her confidence. I am scarcely less pleased with Morris, whose delicacy is no bad guarantee for the future; so that for once, at least, my dear Tom, you find me in good humour with all the world, nor is it my own fault if I be not oftener so! You may smile, Tom, at my self-flattery; but I repeat it. All my philosophy of life has been to submit with a good grace, and make the best of everything—to think as well of everybody as they would permit me to do; and when, as will happen, events went cross-grain, and all fell out "wrong," I was quite ready to "forget my own griefs, and be happy with *you*." And now to dinner, Tom, where I mean to drink your health!

It is all settled; though I have no doubt, after so many "false starts," you'll still expect to hear a contradiction to this in my next letter; but you may believe me this time, Tom. Cary is to be married on Saturday; and that you may have stronger confidence in my words, I beg to assure you that I have not bestowed on her, as her marriage portion, either imaginary estates or mock domains. She is neither to be thought an Irish Princess "en

retraite," nor to be the proud possessor of the "M'Carthy diamonds." In a word, Tom, we have contrived, by some good luck, to conduct the whole of this negotiation without involving ourselves in a labyrinth of lies, and the consequence has been a very wide-spread happiness and contentment.

Morris improves every hour on nearer acquaintance; and even Mrs. D. acknowledges, that when "his shyness rubs off, he'll be downright agreeable and amusing." Now, that same shyness is very little more than the constitutional coldness of *his* country, more palpable when contrasted with the over-warmth of *ours*. It *never does* rub off, Tom, which unfortunately our cordiality occasionally does; and hence the praise bestowed on the constancy of one country, and the censure on the changeability of the other. But this is no time for such dissertations, nor is my head in a condition to follow them out.

The house is beset with milliners, jewellers, and other seductionists of the same type; and Mrs. D.'s voice is loud in the drawing-room on the merits of Brussels lace and the becomingness of rubies. Even Cary appears to have yielded somewhat to the temptation of these vanities, and gives a passing glance at herself in the glass without any very marked disapproval. James is in ecstasies with Morris, who has confided all his horse arrangements to his especial care; and he sits in solemn conclave every morning with half a dozen stunted, knock-kneed bipeds, in earnest discussion of thorough-breds, weight-carriers, and fencers, and talks *Bell's Life* half the day afterwards.

But, above all, Mary Anne has pleased me throughout the whole transaction. Not a shadow of jealousy, not the faintest colouring of any unworthy rivalry has interfered with her sisterly affection, and her whole heart seems devoted to Cary's happiness. Handsome as she always was, the impulse of a high motive has elevated the character of her beauty, and rendered her perfectly lovely. So Belton would seem to think also, if I were only to pronounce from the mere expression of his face as he looks at her.

I must close this at once; there's no use in my trying to journalise any longer, for events follow too fast for recording; besides, Tom, in the midst of all my happiness there comes a dash of sadness across me that I am so soon to part with one so dear to me! The first branch that drops from the tree tells the story of the decay at the trunk; and so it is as the chairs around your hearth become tenantless, you are led to think of the dark winter of old age, the long night before the longer journey! This is all selfishness, mayhap, and so no more of it. On Saturday the wedding, Tom; the Morrises start for Rome, and the Dodds for Ireland. Ay, my old friend, once more we shall meet, and, if I know myself, not to part again till our passports are made out for a better place. And now, my dear friend, for the last time on foreign ground,

I am yours ever affectionately,

KENNY JAMES DODD.

Tell Mrs. Gallagher to have fires in all the rooms, and to see that Nelligan has a look to the roof where the rain used to come in. We must try and make the old house comfortable, and if we cannot have the blue sky without, we'll at least endeavour to secure the means of an Irish welcome within doors.

I suppose it must be a part of that perversity that pertains to human nature in everything, but now that I have determined on going home again, I fancy I can detect a hundred advantages to be derived from foreign travel and foreign residence. You will, of course, meet me by saying, "What are your own experiences, Kenny Dodd? Do they serve to confirm this impression? Have you the evidences of such within the narrow circle of your own family?" No, Tom, I must freely own I have not. But I am perhaps able to say why it has been so, and even that same is something.

You can scarcely take up a number of the *Times* without reading of some newly arrived provincial in London being "done" by sharpers, through the devices of a very stale piece of roguery; his appearance, his dress, and his general air being the signs which have proclaimed him a fit subject for deception. So it is abroad; a certain class of travellers, the "Dodds" for instance, ramble about Switzerland and the Rhine country, John Murray in hand, speaking unintelligible French, and poking their noses everywhere. So long as they are migratory, they form the prey of innkeepers and the harvest of Laquais de Place; but when they settle and domesticate, they become the mark for ridicule from some, and for robbery from others. If they be wealthy, much is conceded to them for their money—that is, their house will be frequented, their dinners eaten, their balls danced at; but as to any admission into "the society" of the place, they have no chance of it. Some Lord George of their acquaintance, cut by his equals, and shunned by his own set, will undertake to provide them guests; and so far as their own hospitalities extend, they will be "in the world," but not one jot further. The illustrious company that honours your *soirée*, amuses itself with racy stories of your bad French, or flippant descriptions of your wife's "toilette;" nor is it enough that they ridicule these, but they will even make laughing matter of your homely notions of right and wrong, and scoff at what you know and feel to be the very best things in your nature. Your "noble friend," or somebody else's "noble friend," has said in public that you are "nobody;' and every Marquis in his garret, and every Count with half the income of your cook, despises as he dines with you. And you deserve it, too; richly deserve it, I say. Had you come on the Continent to be abroad what you were well contented to be at home—had you abstained from the mockery of a class you never belonged to—had you settled down amidst those your equals in rank, and often much more than your equals in knowledge and acquirement—your journey would not have been a series of disappoint-

ments. You would have seen much to delight and interest, and much to improve you. You would have educated your minds while richly enjoying yourselves; and while forming pleasant intimacies, and even friendships, widened the sphere of your sympathies with mankind, and assuredly have escaped no small share of the misfortunes and mishaps that befel the "Dodd Family Abroad."

THE END.

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